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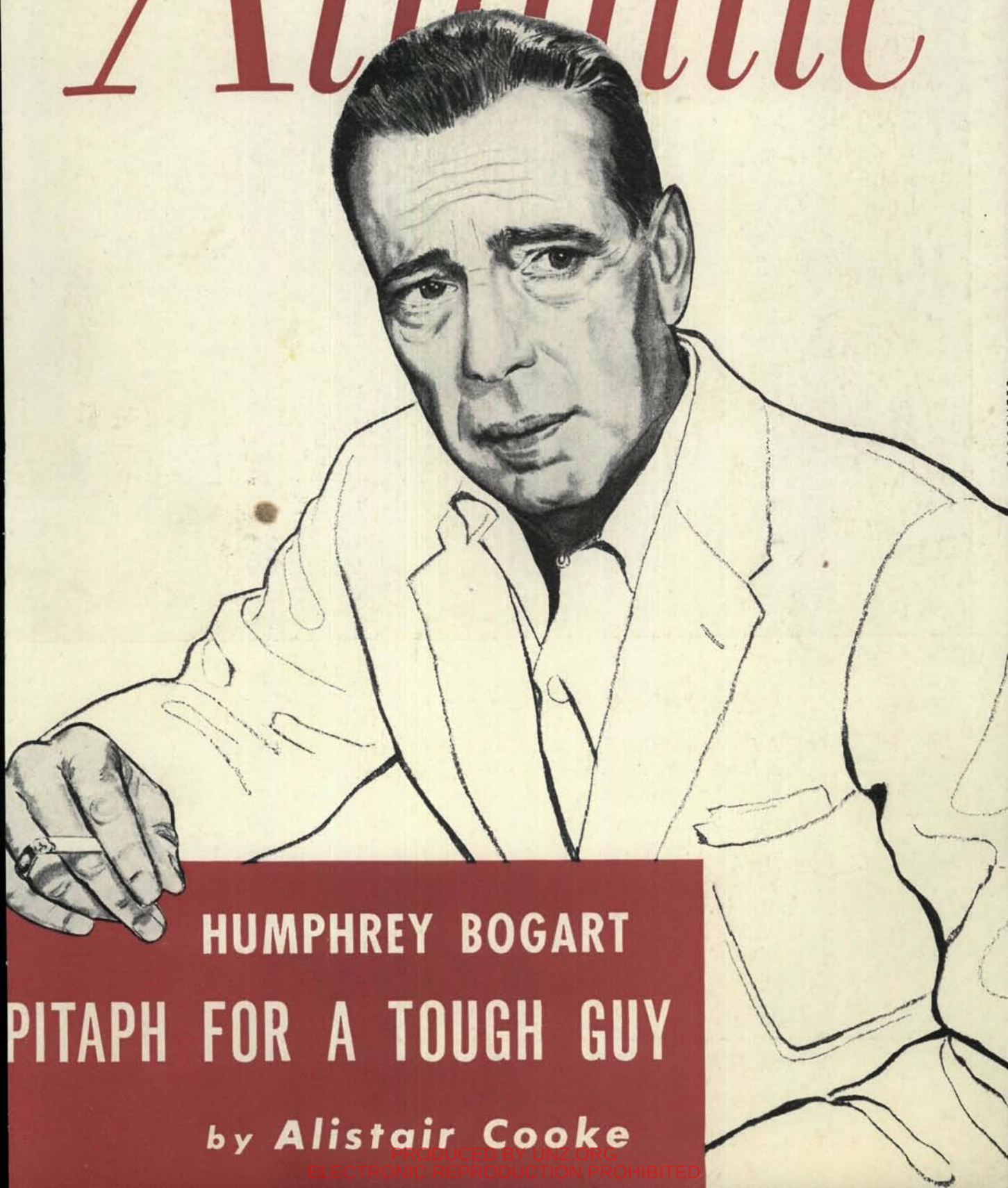

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by Alistair Cooke

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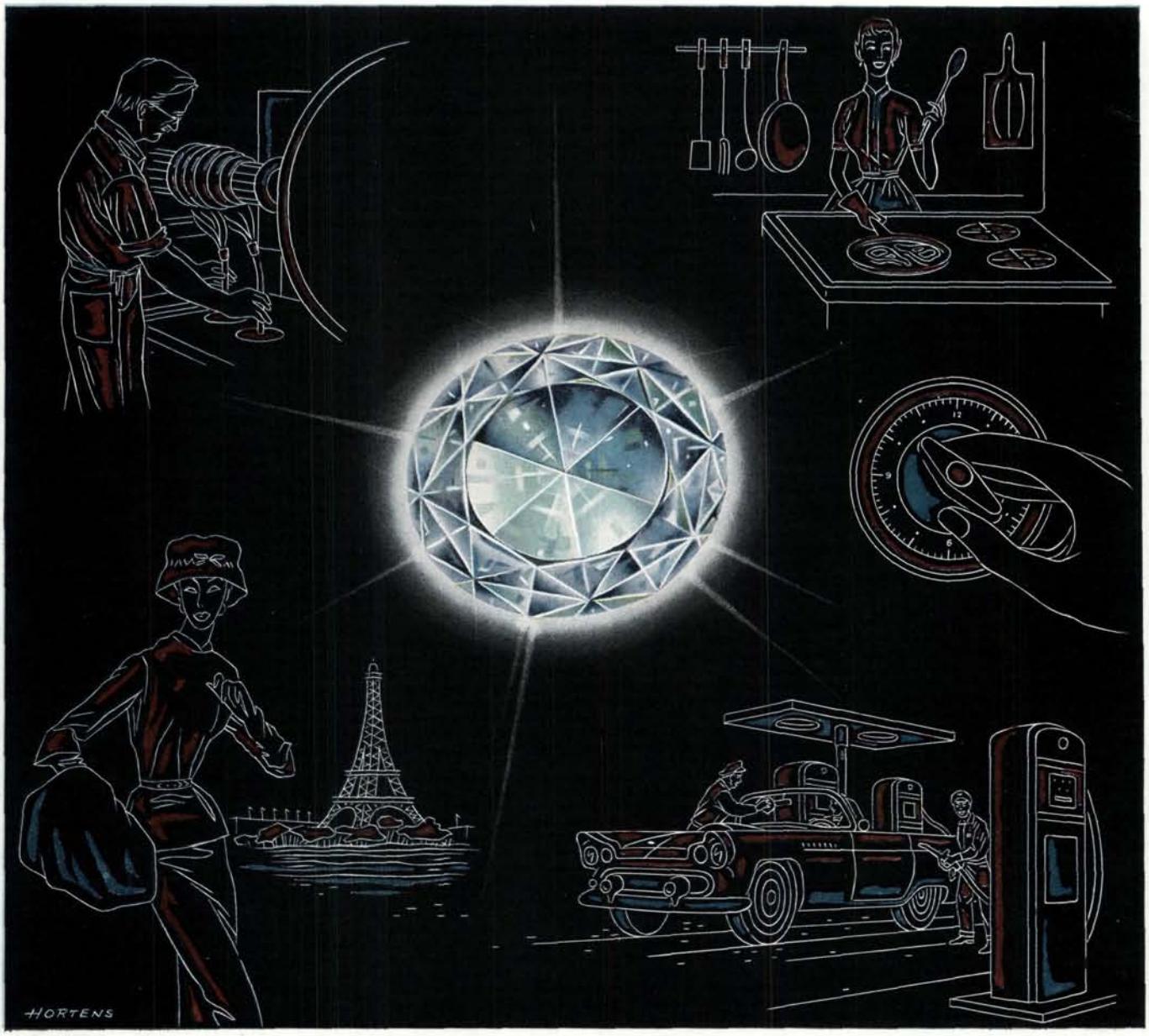

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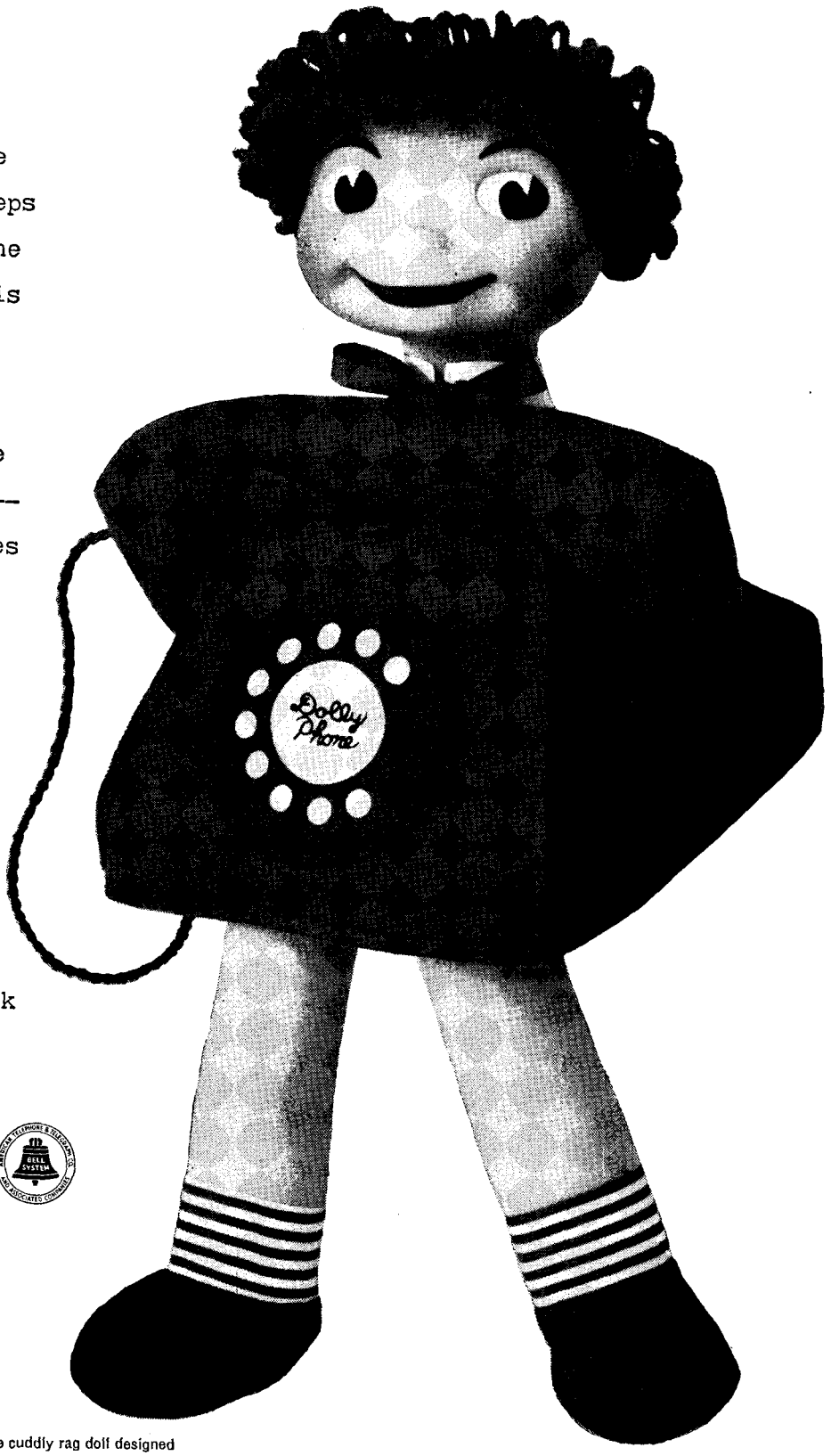

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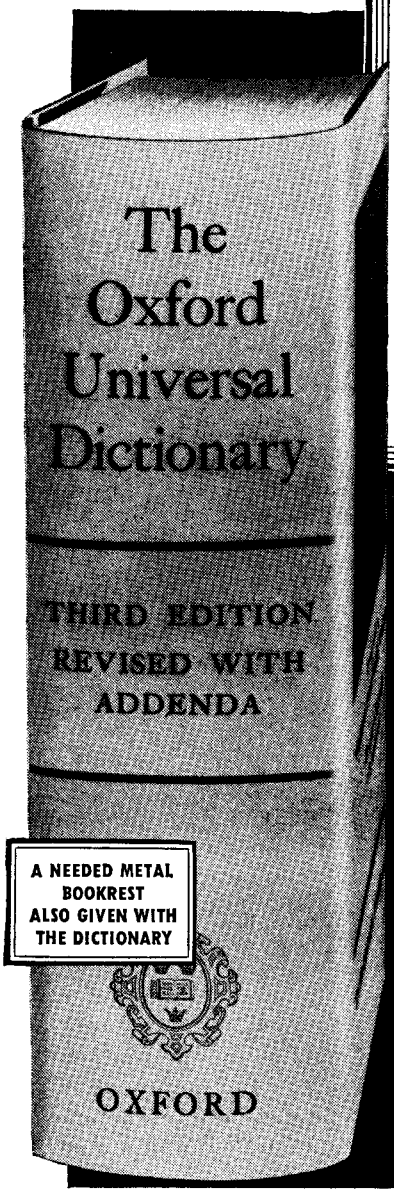

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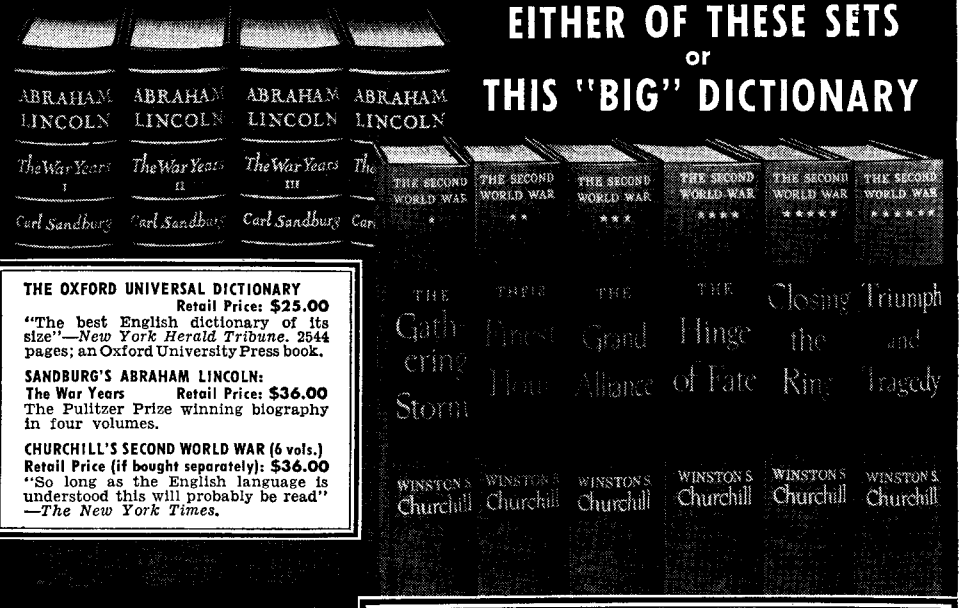

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THE ATLANTIC REPORT
on the World today

Kashmir

THE dispute between India and Pakistan over Kashmir has dragged on for almost ten years, and the only thing to show for repeated United Nations attempts at mediation is a mass of scar tissue. India has now broken its promises to hold a plebiscite and tries to mask its actions behind a smoke screen of technicalities. Yet this is a case where it is difficult to establish absolutes; there is more to the dispute than shows above the surface.

India and Pakistan were partitioned as a result of a conflict and massacre. There are 16 million refugees in the two nations. The number who were killed in their homes or along the wayside has never been accurately established — a million would be a low estimate. It may be easy for nations which have not experienced this holocaust to judge who is right in Kashmir, but the people of Pakistan and India find it hard to think of abstract justice or even fair play when their memories are so bitter.

In addition, the two nations are separated by an ideological dispute over the place of religion in political affairs. It goes back to the 1920s and '30s when the Muslim League preached that Muslims and Hindus in India were two nations and that Muslim minorities could never feel secure under Hindu majorities. The Congress Party said there was only one nation; that almost all Indian Muslims were Hindus who had been converted in the distant past.

Followers of both religions often carried their beliefs to their nerve endings, and clashes resulted from the way a Muslim treated a cow or the way Hindus played music outside a mosque on festival days. The Congress said this tension could be eased and eventually eliminated in a secular democracy patterned after Britain and the United States. The Muslim League said tension could never be eliminated — that Muslims must have a homeland. India became a secular republic and Pakistan became an Islamic republic where only a Muslim can be president.

Pakistan claims Kashmir because 77 per cent of its people are Muslims, and it says that the partition of India meant that Muslim majority areas should automatically go to Pakistan. India says partition was a political division between the areas where the Muslim League was strong and where the Congress was strong, and that religion came into the picture only because the League used it to get votes.

Loaded rifles

Both nations are so wrought up that they cannot even agree on which are the major issues. Kashmir acceded to India in October, 1947, shortly after the state was invaded by tribesmen from the North-West Frontier. Viscount Mountbatten, the last British Viceroy, accepted the accession but specified that the wishes of the people should be consulted after peace had been restored. India accused Pakistan of aiding the raiders and carried the dispute to the United Nations in January, 1948.

The UN said the raiders and the Pakistani troops who later entered the state should withdraw and a plebiscite should be held. Both nations agreed. Now India says a plebiscite is no longer possible, but it also accuses Pakistan of breaking its promises. After agreeing to demilitarization, Pakistan allowed an entirely new army to be organized in Azad Kashmir, the portion of the state which remained under Pakistan's control after a cease-fire

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SEVEN DEADLY SINS

The enthusiastic reception given Lotte Lenya's first Columbia album, "Berlin Theater Songs of Kurt Weill," has prompted us to embark on a recording project which will encompass all Weill's major vocal works, sung by his greatest interpreter. Lotte Lenya, who is Weill's widow, is that rare combination her late husband's works demanded. She is a superb actress who can also sing. Weill once said, "My melodies always come to my inner ear in Lenya's voice." Every note, every phrase of "The Seven Deadly Sins" bears out his statement. A ballet-with-song, it was written expressly for her, in Paris in 1933. Bertolt Brecht (who also collaborated on "The Threepenny Opera") supplied its bitterly satiric text. Weill matched it with similarly bitter, yet intoxicatingly beautiful music. In the inevitable critical storm which greeted any Weill-Brecht product, Lotte Lenya won universal acclaim for her portrayal of Anna, heroine of the piece. She repeats her triumph in this first recording of Weill's haunting masterpiece.

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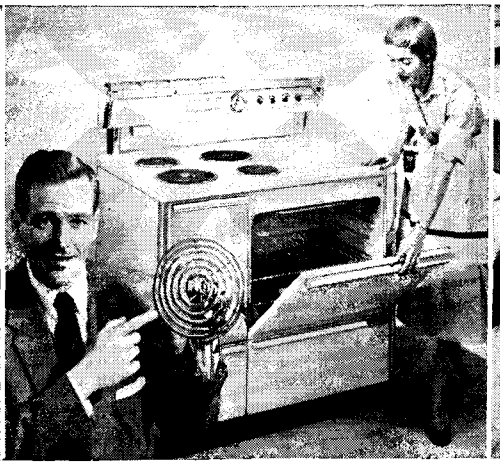

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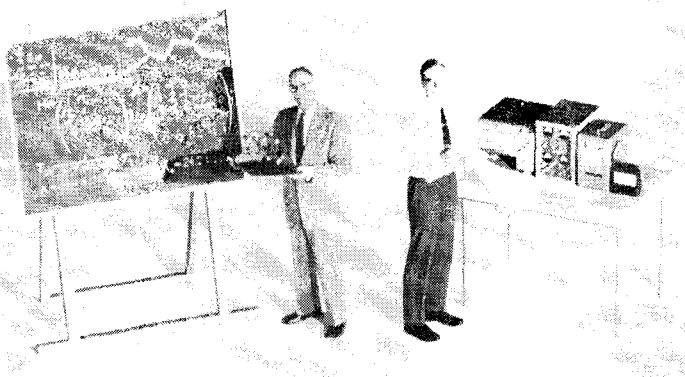

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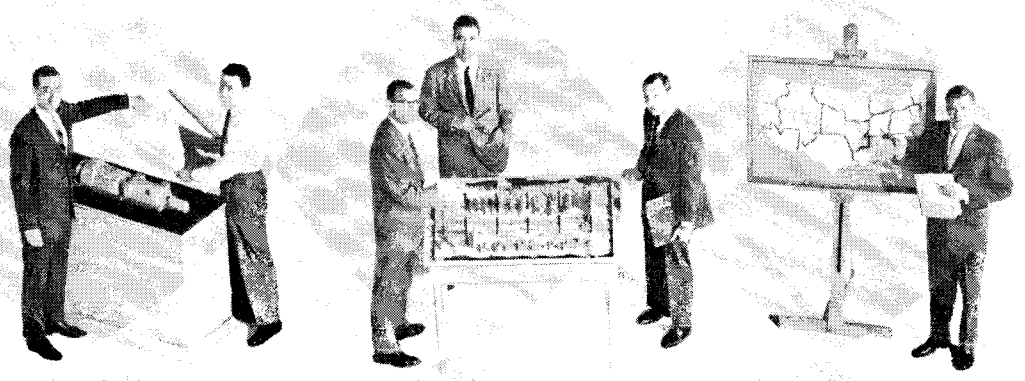

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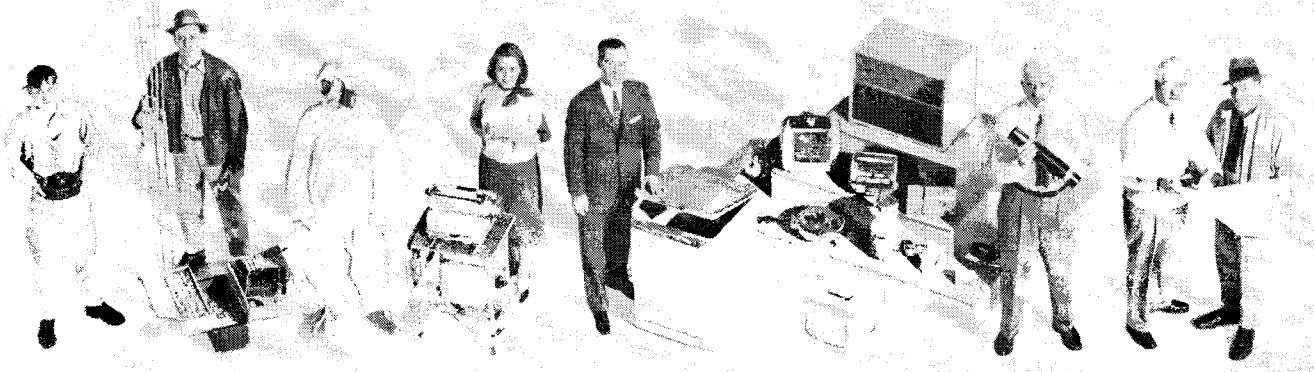

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took effect on New Year's Day, 1949. A few years ago there were 30 battalions of these forces. India says there are now 45 battalions, complete with the full equipment of a modern army.

Pakistan says the Azad Kashmir forces are local people who have organized for their own defense, and that they are not part of the Pakistani Army. It has never presented any convincing explanation of how an army of 30 or 45 battalions with tanks and heavy guns could spring into being in a poor and backward region where the entire population amounts to less than one million.

A natural explanation is that Pakistan feared an attack by India and was not willing to accept the UN resolution which gave India the sole right to maintain troops in Kashmir. Pakistan therefore created a puppet army which could remain in Kashmir after Pakistani regulars had withdrawn.

India suffered from the same insecurity complex. Late in 1953 the Prime Ministers of both nations were holding direct negotiations on Kashmir and were discussing a compromise solution. Relations between the two countries seemed to be improving for the first time in six years. Then came rumors of impending American military aid to Pakistan, and India abruptly broke off the talks. It appeared to India that Pakistan was negotiating with one hand and grabbing for a gun with the other.

Indians and Pakistanis were facing each other with loaded rifles; for the United States to introduce more guns on one side was like Russia's selling guns to Egypt and thus upsetting the military balance between Egypt and Israel. Americans gave many assurances that these weapons were meant only to help Pakistan defend itself against possible Communist aggression. India still feared that someday it might be the target for these weapons. Pakistan has since declared that India is its only enemy, and Indian fears have been strengthened.

Reform but no freedom

While arguments about demilitarization delayed a plebiscite, India bolstered its tenuous legal position in Kashmir with a lavish display of economic assistance. The development budget for Kashmir last year was half as large as for Bombay State, which has twelve times the population of Kashmir. Since 1948, government spending on education has tripled; on agriculture it has quadrupled, and on health it has doubled. Taxes are lower than in any part of India, and there are more tourists than ever before to buy Kashmiri handicrafts.

The state government has carried out a vigorous land reform program. Land has been seized without compensation, and feudalism has been wiped out. Holdings are limited to a maximum of 22 acres. About one sixth of the cultivable area has been distributed to the landless. There are still many tenant farmers, but their rents are fixed at a quarter of the crop, and the landlord has to pay the land tax out of his share.

Kashmiris appear to have everything except the right to choose whether they shall join Pakistan. Anyone who creates pro-Pakistan propaganda runs the risk of being branded a traitor and thrown into jail without trial. Newspapers which favor Pakistan are suppressed. The recent elections turned out to be a farce. The ruling National Conference got a majority of seats even before voting took place; 38 of its candidates were returned unopposed to the 75-member State Assembly.

The suppression of public opinion dates mainly from August, 1953, when Sheikh Abdullah, the Prime Minister, was thrown into jail without trial. He has remained there ever since. No one has ever explained why he was arrested, although it apparently had nothing to do with Pakistan since Abdullah had always favored India. There are rumors, however, that the Prime Minister thought Kashmir should retain a measure of independence from India.

Abdullah's arrest caused many Muslims to waver in their previous strong support of the National Conference. His successor, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, had to guard his government against three sources of opposition: the adherents of Abdullah, Pakistan sympathizers, and those Kashmiris who favor India but who also think that India is undemocratically blocking a plebiscite.

Bakshi is popular despite his strong methods toward the opposition. He attracts large crowds wherever he goes and he walks among the people without bodyguards. He tours the countryside holding court in schoolyards and under trees, and local farmers feel free to vent their grievances, at least their nonpolitical ones.

No plebiscite

As India warmed up to the job of helping Kashmir advance, it grew cool to the idea of a plebiscite. In March, 1956, Nehru publicly declared that a plebiscite was no longer possible and that Kashmir was legally a part of India. In November the Kashmir Constituent Assembly voted a constitu-

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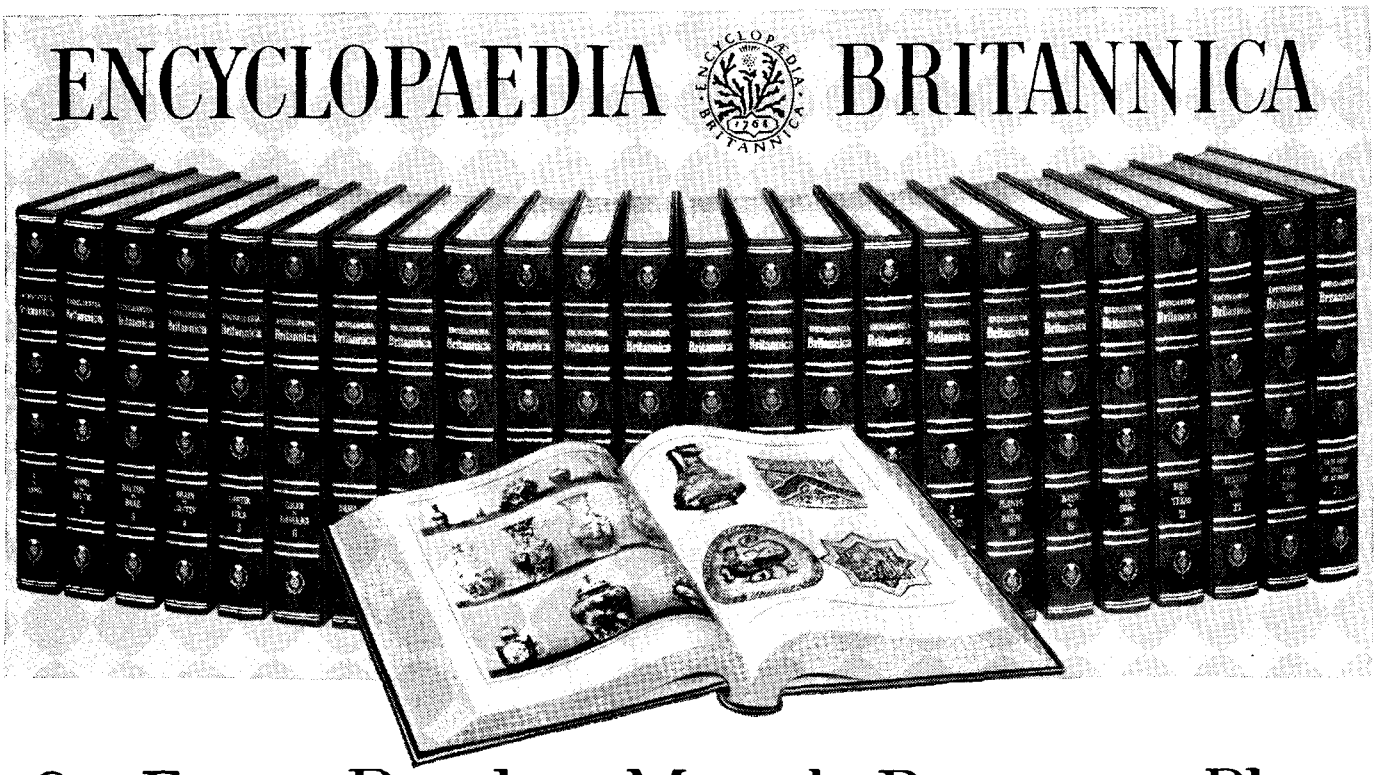

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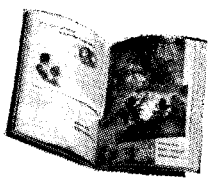

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tion making Kashmir a full-fledged Indian state. It took formal effect on January 26. Pakistan seized this as an opportunity to bring the dispute back to the UN Security Council, which had not considered the matter in more than four years. The Pakistani case had the virtue of simplicity; India was denying Kashmiris the right of self-determination. In turn India, while being less than frank regarding its own actions, has asked whether a fair plebiscite has ever been possible, and whether a plebiscite of any sort is desirable at present.

When India agreed to the UN resolutions of almost ten years ago it stipulated that any plebiscite should take place in an atmosphere free from religious tension. Pakistan rejected restrictions on the use of religion as an issue. Since Pakistan's main appeal was based on its claim to be the sole guardian of Muslim interests, it felt that its hands would be tied if it could not discuss religion in any way it pleased.

But India was well aware that religious and racial appeals are good weapons to use in a plebiscite, where voters are asked to answer yes or no to a single question that will seal their fate for the rest of their lives. Skillfully placed rumors would have a telling effect.

Even now when you talk to Pakistani officials about the economic benefits that have been conferred on Kashmiris they say, in effect, "Yes, a lot has been done. India wants to get votes. But what will happen to the Kashmiris if the Indians win a plebiscite?" There is one rumor currently circulating in the Srinagar bazaars, that Hindus have a scheme to seize Muslim lands.

Muslim versus Hindu

There are slightly more than a million Hindus, Sikhs, and Buddhists in Kashmir; they predominate in the Jammu and Ladakh areas. If a plebiscite were held on an all-Kashmir basis and Pakistan won it, this sizable minority would automatically become part of an Islamic state. The chances are that a good many of them would begin a tragic mass migration to India. Several years ago both sides considered a separate plebiscite so that Ladakh and Jammu might join India while the rest of Kashmir might go to Pakistan, but for various reasons no agreement was reached on this compromise.

There is still another hurdle to get over. There are more than 35 million Muslims living in India. If a plebiscite were held on a limited basis, religious feelings would still be whipped up; and if even a single part of Kashmir accepted the two-nation theory and joined Pakistan, Hindu fanatics would feel justified in waging a hate campaign against Indian Muslims. The partition massacres might be renewed in all their fury.

Pakistan rejects this argument and says that India, in effect, is threatening to unleash a genocidal campaign against Muslims in India if the UN insists on carrying out a plebiscite in Kashmir. The truth of the matter may never be proved, because India will always reject a plebiscite on the ground that it must guard against communal disorders. However, there is then a risk of trouble from the other side. Pakistan says that if the UN is unable to bring about a plebiscite in Kashmir, it will not be able to hold back frontier tribesmen who want to liberate their coreligionists from "Hindu oppression."

India rejects this as propaganda, saying that the frontier is well guarded by Pakistani troops and that the tribesmen could never reach Kashmir without the consent, if not the assistance, of the Pakistan government.

Indian leaders say privately that Pakistan will not gamble on a full-scale war. Even with American military aid, the Pakistani Army is much weaker than India's, and New Delhi knows that Pakistan will not risk a fight on unequal terms. However, Indians are afraid that Pakistan might stir up limited fighting along the cease-fire line in the hope that India will change its mind and accept a UN force such as was organized for use in Egypt.

There are indications that Nehru is still open to compromise despite his declaration that the Kashmir case is closed. He has said that India's only concern is the well-being of the Kashmiris and he admits that India cannot hope to hold Kashmir forever without the consent of the people. Nehru is also well aware that the dispute is a

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running sore in the body politic of the subcontinent. It forces India and Pakistan to spend money on armaments they can ill afford; it gives Pakistan an excuse to shout slogans about Hindu oppression; and it destroys India's prestige in world affairs.

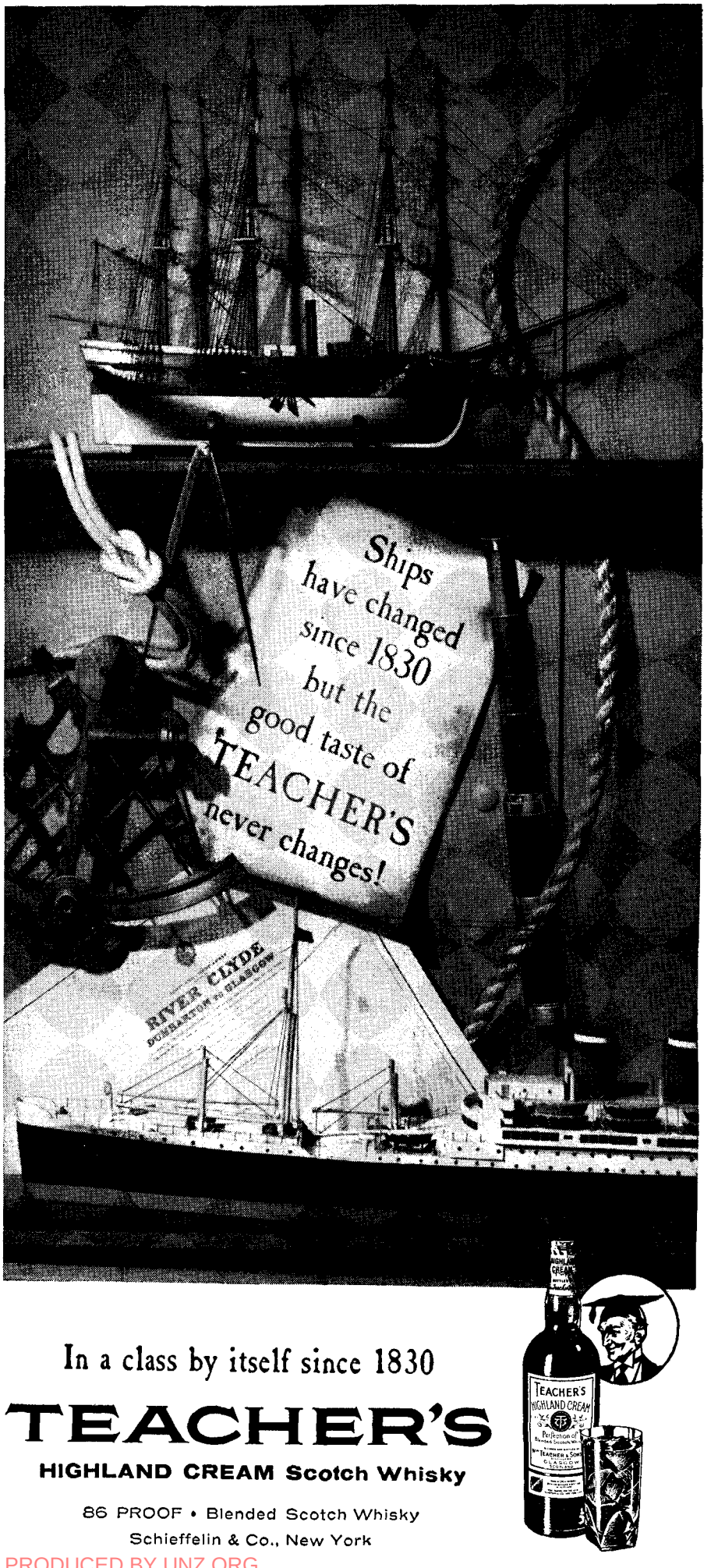
The need for compromise

The Kashmir problem is now a matter of national pride in both India and Pakistan. Movie audiences in India cheer when Krishna Menon appears in the newsreels. The problem of Kashmir is also tied up with domestic affairs in the two nations, which explains why Indian and Pakistani politicians are frequently heard making strong statements — they go down well with the general public.

It appears that a final solution will never emerge unless representatives of both nations can be persuaded to meet privately and indulge in the give-and-take that is necessary for any compromise. Continued UN debate may only delay self-determination for the Kashmiri people since both sides would be tempted to strengthen their fixed positions and indulge in propaganda pyrotechnics for the edification of their own people. This would increase the underlying tension which has prevented a settlement for so long.

A continuation of the dispute, among other things, furthers Russian propaganda purposes in India. The leaders of Pakistan are already bragging that the United States and Great Britain are supporting Pakistan's case because Pakistan is a member of SEATO. Indian newspapers repeat these statements as evidence that India is not getting a fair hearing on Kashmir. They ignore the fact that India's case is so complicated that it took Krishna Menon eight hours to explain it; Indians mistake boredom for prejudice.

While anti-American and anti-British feelings increase among the Indians, pro-Russian feelings also increase. The Indian public feels it can depend on Russia since Khrushchev announced more than a year ago that Kashmir is part of India. Khrushchev is not concerned about self-determination for 4.5 million Kashmiris any more than he is for his own people — but he is interested in winning friends among 360 million Indians.



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Washington

THE Eisenhower-Macmillan talks mark the beginning of a new type of Anglo-American relationship. The warborn alliance grew to greatness out of sheer necessity and through the personal relationships of Roosevelt and Churchill. That partnership began to wane when those wartime leaders departed from the political scene, and in many ways it already had been transformed before the guns went off last fall.

The Bermuda relationship was that of a great and rich nation attempting to get back on close speaking terms with an old relative. Wartime Britain and America were not military equals, of course, but British diplomatic leadership and skill as personified by Churchill brought the balance closer to even. In the old days the top leaders argued out the issues and compromised the results. This was less so with Truman and Attlee or Eisenhower and Eden, but the fiction of the old partnership's continuation carried on and often applied.

The discussion at Bermuda over the Middle East alone was enough to demonstrate the new relationship. The British in advance fed out to the press a strong line opposing American dependence on the United Nations, and when they came to the mid-Atlantic island they were saying they would talk tough to the Americans.

Perhaps in private they did. But Eisenhower and Dulles were adamant that America would work through the UN because only in that way did they feel they could continue to woo the Arabs and avoid the stigma of Britain's disastrous colonial policy in the Middle East.

Macmillan had no alternative but to back down. He put the best face on it he could. But this did not and does not mean that Britain and America cannot function together as a team in areas where their interests are more parallel. That demonstration came in the American decision to turn over to Britain the American intermediate ballistic missile now under development. Here the military thinking of the two nations agreed. The truth of the matter is that Britain, which for long had criticized America for putting all its eggs in the atomic basket lest America be unable to fight a so-called small war, now is doing exactly the same thing — and under the same compulsion of cost. In Washington it used to be called "more bang for the buck." In London it's "more punch for the pound."

This decision will free Britain of the Soviet atomic blackmail exercised by the Russian missiles currently in place in Communist East Germany and aimed at London. As Macmillan said at Bermuda, there now will be a mutual deterrent. And as he also truly said when asked if the move would lessen British fears that American bombers in the isles had made Britain a Soviet target: "We're all in this together. It's no good if somebody is trying to opt out of it."

Where the two nations are indeed in it together — in NATO, in the German reunification issue, in the satellite problem — they can and will work together, framing policies with something approaching the frankness and friendliness which formerly marked the partnership down to the lowest echelon.

When differences occur

But where there is a determined American view contrary to the British — in China, over colonialism, about Arab-Israeli relations — the American position will presumably predominate out of sheer force of power and because there is no longer any British ability to add the strength of personality to the scales. Despite all of the Bermuda talk of "old comrades in arms," the fact is that Macmillan was only an aide to Eisenhower in wartime North Africa and that the President has not changed his view of that relationship whatever the amenities.

The corollary of the altered Anglo-American relationship is a new attitude on the part of Britain toward its neighbors on the continent of Europe. This will be a historic summer for the free world if it does indeed see the ratification of the common market and European atomic pool treaties. As Britain turns toward these Continental self-help devices, a new series of transatlantic problems will arise. Already at Bermuda the Americans were warning Britain, and by inference the Continental nations, not to raise a common tariff wall around a

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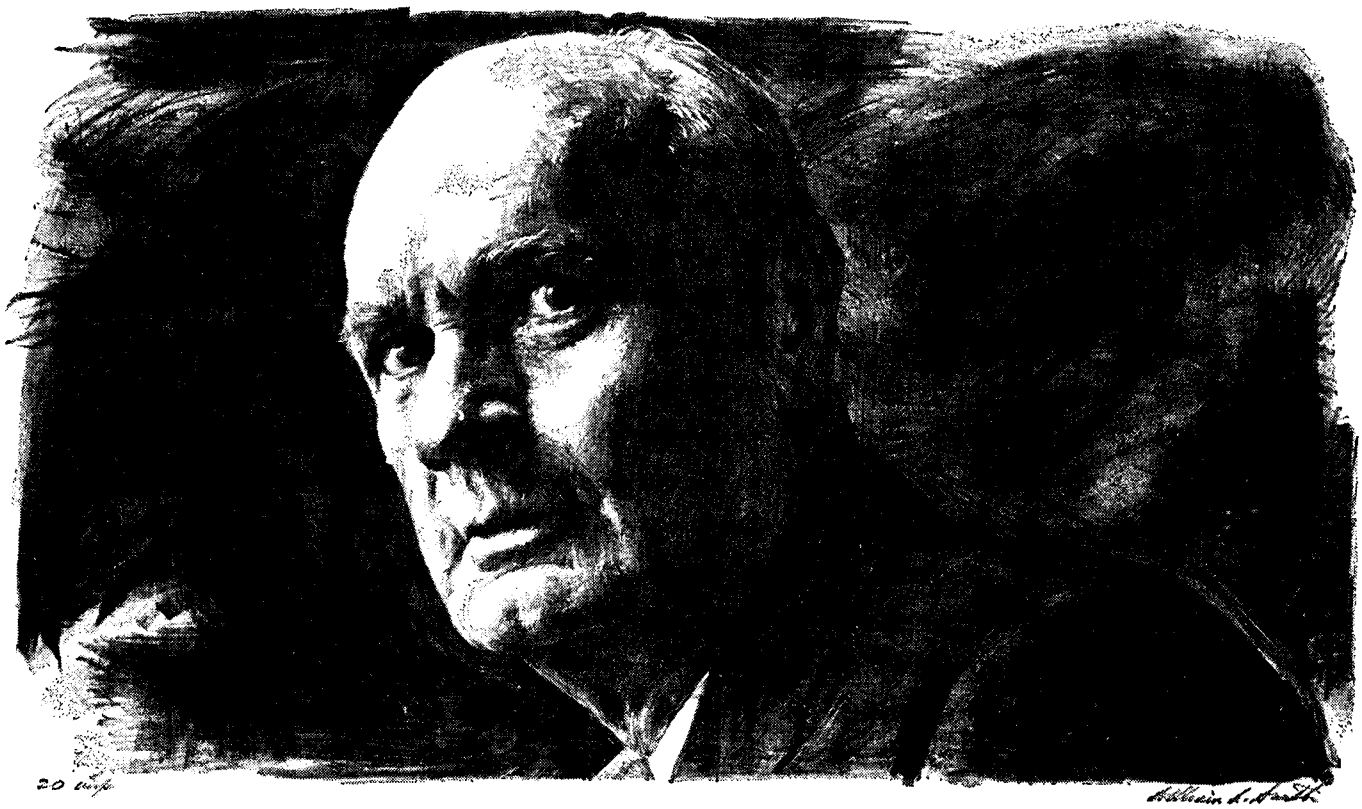

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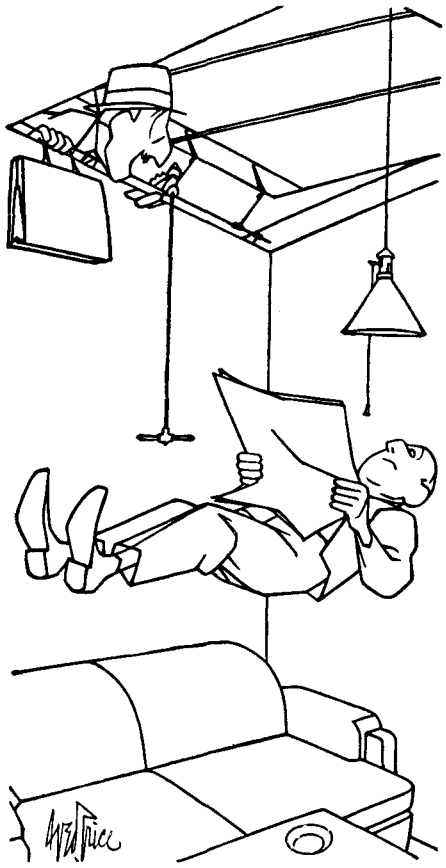

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The splits in the parties

The first session of the 85th Congress brought to the surface the internal convolutions within each party. The Democrats, of course, have long been split on the civil rights issue. But to this division has now been added a new schizophrenia, for the party is showing signs of a major division on foreign policy. In short, the South not only stands apart from the North and West on the race issue but it is moving away from the rest of the party on internationalism.

The Republicans, long divided on internationalism, now find themselves riven as well over what President Eisenhower calls "modern Republicanism." With Eisenhower eliminated as a candidate for 1960, the GOP is involved in an internal struggle between its liberal and conservative wings for dominance at the next presidential election. The budget issue has demonstrated this along with the preliminaries to the 1958 midterm election when most of the party's Neanderthals in the Senate (Messrs. Goldwater, Jenner, McCarthy, Malone, Martin of Pennsylvania, and Revercomb) will face the voters.

The reaction of Congress to the President's request that he be authorized in advance to use the armed forces in the Middle East did much to demonstrate that the Senate in general was disenchanted with the Administration's handling of the crisis in that area. The roll calls also showed the new fissure in the Democratic Party.

On the Russell amendment to knock out the economic and military aid features of the Eisenhower Doctrine, 15 of the 25 "yea" votes came from the Old South (including pairs). Only the two Alabama senators and the two from Texas said "no." And when the roll was called on final passage, 10 of these same 15 Southerners opposed the plan as a whole.

In both Senate and House a handful of Northern and Western Democrats also voted "no" on the final roll calls, chiefly because they distrusted the President and Dulles. The party division was emphasized, however, by the fact that all the new

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Northern and Western Democratic senators elected last November (Messrs. Carroll, Church, Clark, and Lausche) voted with the President because many of them shared Senator Kennedy's view that they could do otherwise only at the risk of tempting the Russians to move against the Middle East.

New voice of protectionism

The Southern defection on foreign aid is not, of course, new. But the vote against the Eisenhower Doctrine, in essence a warning to the Kremlin to keep the Red Army out of the Middle East, was something new. Here the Southerners were deserting their traditional internationalist stand, a position going back to the early part of this century.

The common explanation in Washington is that Southern economic interests have shifted from the age of free trade, which benefited cotton exports, to protectionism, which presumably benefits the new textile mills and other forms of Southern industrialization.

That this is true in Georgia at least is demonstrated by a story. A year ago Georgia Tech was on the point of signing a government contract to furnish some members of its engineering faculty to a Japanese university under one of the exchange programs. The professors were to teach engineering, but not in the textile field. Yet when word of the plan got around to the university's alumni in the textile industry the pressure was put on to kill the agreement. And Georgia Tech did not go through with the proposal.

In time, perhaps, Southern industrialization will reach a stage of such diverse and counter interests that there will be no clear economic motivation either for or against protectionism. But until that day arrives, and while textiles remain as important as they have now become, the Democratic Party is likely to be more and more represented in the South by protectionists.

The Elephant and the budget

Mr. Eisenhower has stated the case, on the Republican side, for modernizing his party. His massive $72 billion peacetime budget represents, he says, the government services which the people demand and are entitled to.

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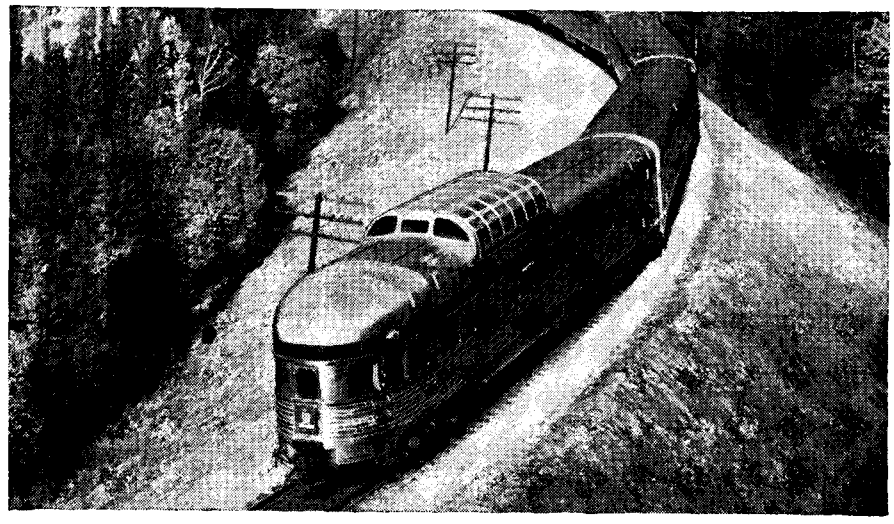

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The political efficacy of this approach was well demonstrated by the Eisenhower vote last November and by the Democratic wailing that the President had stolen the New and Fair Deal platforms.

Yet it is perfectly clear that the Eisenhower approach is unacceptable to many Republicans, especially to many at the top of the congressional seniority ladders. Senator Knowland's decision not to run again for the Senate (and the presumption that he will run for governor of California in order to challenge Vice President Nixon for the Presidency in 1960) offers a conservative, traditional Republican pole around which those members of the GOP can coalesce.

Mr. Eisenhower has taken some pains to declare that his big peacetime budget has no connection whatsoever with his new Republicanism. Yet it is difficult to accept that thesis. The budget is huge because the President is determined to have America play its proper role in the world, with force of arms and economic aid to back up that role, and because he believes that the American population, growing so fast, demands and is entitled to the services called for, whether they be schools, post offices, superhighways, or medical research.

To many Democrats, the President has not asked enough for some of these services. But it is also true that the Administration is not united in backing the Eisenhower program. Secretary of the Treasury Humphrey's "hair-curling depression" warning made that clear. And the way the organized business community and professional tax-cut advocates rallied behind the President's invitation to cut the budget seriously threatened the Eisenhower program.

The congressional hacking at the Eisenhower figures has not been entirely political. The coalition of Southern Democrats and conservative Republicans is at the base of much of the so-called economy drive. The President simply has not converted any great part of his party, as represented in Congress, to his "modern Republicanism." The public excuse for budget cutting may be economy or anti-inflation. But fundamentally the issue is over the GOP's attitude toward the role of the federal government itself.

This division applies as well to foreign affairs. On the Eisenhower Doctrine roll call there were a bare 4 Senate and 27 House Republican "no" votes. But no one in Washington believes this is an indication that the President has reduced the old Republican isolationism to such a vanishing point. The foreign aid votes later this year, as well as the Senate roll call on the peaceful atomic energy treaty, will be a better indication of GOP support for the Eisenhower version of America's role in the world.

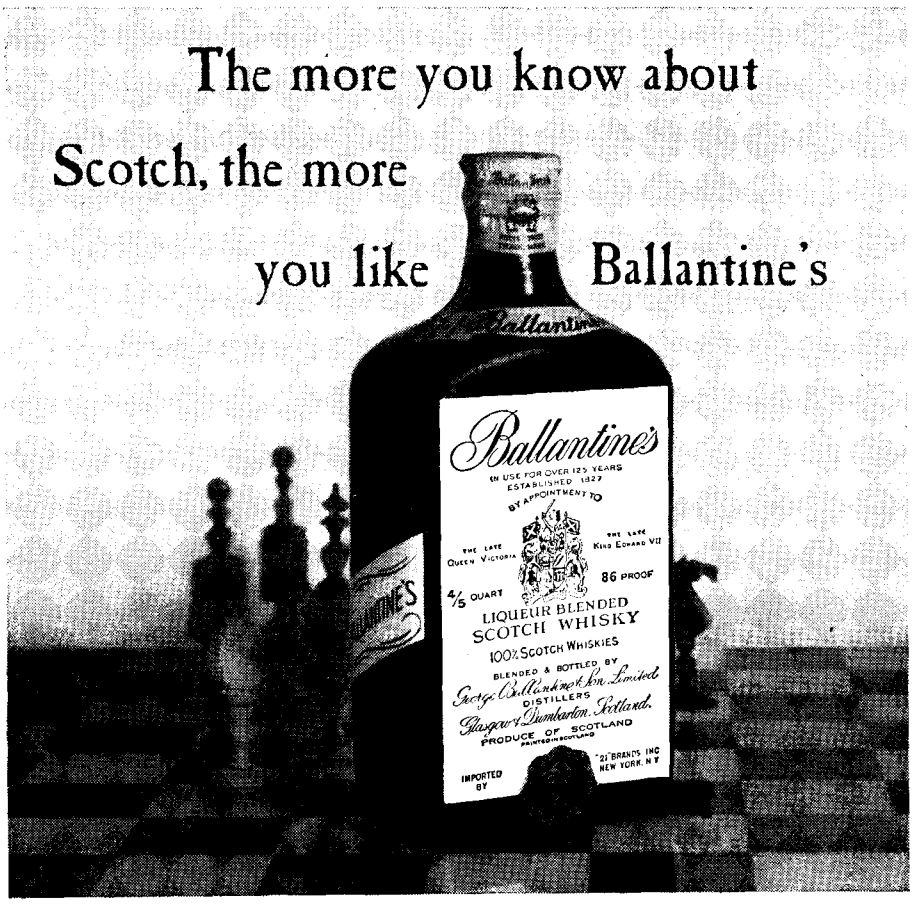
The net result of the party divisions as indicated in this new Congress is likely to be a series of contradictory actions, puzzling to many Americans and to many foreign nations as well. It probably will tend to limit the effectiveness of what the Administration is trying to do abroad, for no one will be sure that even the very popular President can have his own way.

Mood of the Capital

Six years ago Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg wrote: "A rule of conduct — as well as a rule of accommodation — requires some sort of unity between the legislative and the executive branches of Government. We found it before. We must find it again. Or we shall have no foreign policy worthy of the name during these next two critical years."

The Senate struggle over the Eisenhower Doctrine this year demonstrated the truth of the late senator's thesis. The fiery, open breach between the Senate Democrats and the President (with Secretary Dulles taking the heat directly) continued until Eisenhower altered the nature of the Administration's relationship to Congress. Only when the President himself began to talk frankly and privately to the Democratic leaders did the storm subside.

The emergence of Senate Democratic Leader Lyndon Johnson as a party spokesman on foreign policy has helped to provide a "rule of accommodation" or at least the means. But the Middle East row and its outcome have not entirely resolved the problem of how to conduct a bipartisan foreign policy, especially when rival parties are in control at opposite ends of Pennsylvania Avenue.



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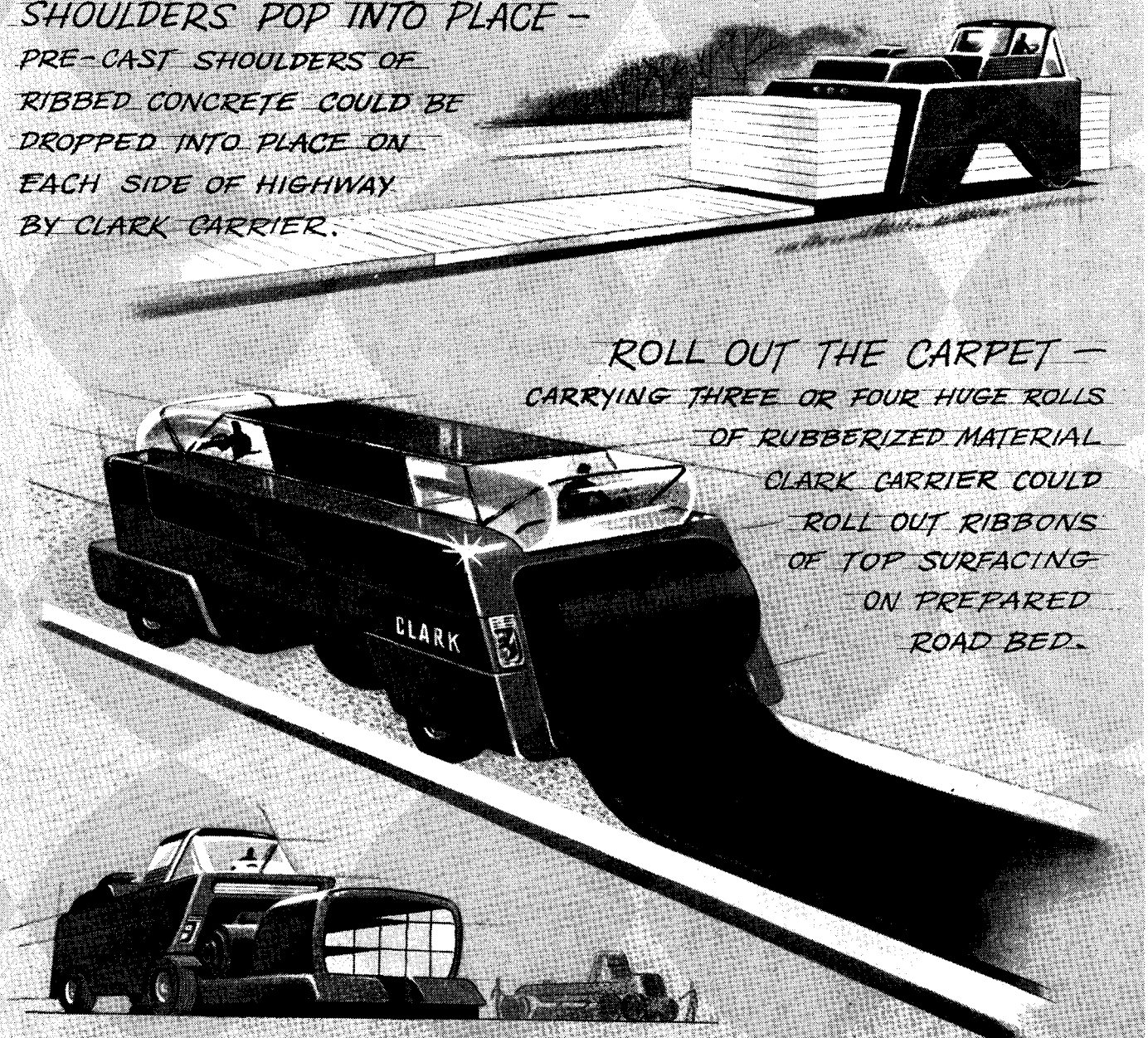

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It is a characteristic paradox of French politics that the post-war government which got off to the most sensationally bad start has turned out to be the longest-lived in the history of the Fourth Republic. The explanation for what by French standards is a tour de force is not simple. It cannot be attributed solely to the political genius of Guy Mollet. This bespectacled former schoolteacher from Arras has never been a particularly flamboyant political personality. Yet it would be equally mistaken to say that the longevity of Mollet's Socialist government has been due solely to objective political conditions beyond his control.

Part of the explanation is certainly the freak result of the elections of January, 1956, which made the Socialists the strongest non-Communist party in France and thus a pillar of any possible government coalition. Part of the explanation is the reluctance of Mollet's rivals to burn their own fingers trying to pull France's hottest chestnut — Algeria — out of the fire of North African nationalism.

There is, furthermore, the fact that Mollet's has in effect been a wartime government and that it has profited from the patriotic fervor that all except catastrophic wars customarily elicit. Yet when all is said and done, due credit must be given to a certain canniness that has permitted Mollet to judge the temper of an unstable Assembly and to know just how far he could go in pushing Socialist legislation or North African reforms.

Stated in general terms, Mollet's personal formula of government has been the reverse of his predecessor's. Whereas Edgar Faure sought to placate the French conservative groups and the vested interests in metropolitan France in order to be free to pursue a liberal policy in North Africa, Guy Mollet has pursued a right-wing policy in North Africa and a pseudo-Socialist policy at home.

It is doubtful that this was a conscious design from the beginning. Rather it seems to have been the product of circumstances. Mollet's first instinct on becoming Premier was to continue Faure's liberal policy in North Africa. He made this clear in his speech of investiture and in his appointment of General Georges Catroux as Resident Minister for Algeria. Catroux was one of de Gaulle's wartime associates and a noted advocate of French "liberal colonialism." Only after this appointment had provoked an uproar and a threat of secession of Algeria from France did Catroux resign and Mollet pursue a different policy in Algeria.

Tough policy in Algeria

One hears it said everywhere in Paris today that "a government of the Left has done what no government of the Right could do — pursue a tough policy in Algeria." If any single person deserves credit for this, it is less Guy Mollet than Robert Lacoste, his Resident Minister for Algeria. Lacoste is a former labor union official who came out of the "appeasing thirties" and the Munich era persuaded that one should never negotiate except from a situation of strength.

The reasoning underlying this policy in Algeria has been that once the French are strong and have shown that they cannot be booted out of Algeria, the Moslem rebels will be prepared to negotiate. To give muscle to this policy the French forces in Algeria were increased from 200,000 to 450,000, which is the number that have been engaged there since last autumn. But unfortunately for Lacoste and for those who believed in this policy, it has not worked out as they thought it would. The French have indeed set up an impressive military apparatus in Algeria, but the Arab rebels are as reluctant as ever to negotiate a cease-fire that does not first guarantee the principle of an independent Algeria.

What has happened in Algeria, in fact, has not been very far from what Pierre Mendès-France predicted when he quit the Mollet government a year ago. The Algerian revolt, instead of being mastered, has become envenomed. The more envenomed it has become, the more powers the Resident Minister has demanded in order to deal with it, and the more victory-claiming communiqués he has put out to appease a nervous and skeptical public opinion in France. It has become almost a routine matter now to expect a new weekly bulletin announcing that the Algerian revolt "is at its last

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gasp." Yet each week a new lap in this bloody marathon is rounded, and the task of administering Algeria grows steadily more difficult.

The Suez fiasco only increased the suspicion that has been driving a deeper and deeper wedge between the European and Moslem communities in Algeria. In this situation of growing violence and uncertainty the voices of those moderate Frenchmen who had long advocated amicable relations with their Moslem neighbors have been drowned in an atmosphere rife with blind hatred. The last moderate French newspaper in Algeria, *Espoir-Algérie*, folded last February, leaving the field to the shrill clamor of the *colon* press.

By virtue of the Draconian powers that he has been invested with, Lacoste can now place any Frenchman suspected of harboring relations with members of the Arab National Liberation Front under indefinite house arrest, without trial. In the eyes of some French administrators every Arab is — at least potentially — a member of the National Liberation Front. Thus, instead of making the Arab rebels reasonable and ready to negotiate, the policy of force has made every Arab a potential enemy of France.

In a country fundamentally as liberty-loving as France such a policy is bound to stir up criticism and opposition. Lacoste's policy has done so, even in the ranks of his own Socialist Party. But what is extraordinary is the relative weakness of this opposition. Those French liberals who, like the lawyer Maurice Garçon or the Catholic writer François Mauriac, have repeatedly denounced the worst abuses of French administration in Algeria now form a distinct minority.

A necessary evil

For the majority of the French the war in Algeria is, if not a popular one, at any rate one they accept as a categorical necessity. The proof of their resignation is the astonishing discipline and cohesion displayed by the 500,000 French officers and men fighting in Algeria. There have been a few scattered acts of insubordination and refusal to fight. But neither the Communists nor the pacifists have been able to organize a single large-scale mutiny or even an effective strike against the continuation of hostilities in Algeria.

Indeed, it would probably not be an exaggeration to say that the prolongation of the Algerian war, the insults of the Voice of the Arabs radio, and the bellicose speeches of such North African demagogues as Allal el Fassi (the firebrand leader of the Moroccan Istiqlal party) have revived French anti-Semitism — an anti-Semitism that is this time non-Jewish or, to be more specific, anti-Arabic.

The intensity of this feeling explains the overwhelming support in the French Parliament for the Suez action as contrasted with the stormy reception it got in the British House of Commons. And not the least strange phenomenon of the present French political scene is the fact that it was a Jew — Pierre Mendès-France — who denounced that ill-fated expedition as "an act of folly."

French-Israeli alliance

It is not surprising, of course, in view of the repeated provocations from Cairo, that there should have developed a genuine French-Israeli axis — an alliance which was dramatically sealed by the secret trip that David Ben-Gurion is reported to have made to Paris in late October to see Premier Guy Mollet. As is inevitable, the policy of friendship for Israel has had its partisans and its opponents in the highest spheres of the French government. Most of the support, for example, for the idea of a trans-Israel pipeline from Aqaba to the Mediterranean has come from the French Ministry of Defense, while its opponents have been concentrated in the French Finance Ministry, which looks upon the scheme as a financially dubious proposition.

In taking this negative stand the Finance Ministry has undoubtedly expressed the reservations felt by a number of French business enterprises which have had extensive experience in the Middle East and which are none too happy over the increasingly evident pro-Israel sympathies of the government and of the French people as a whole.

A trans-Israel pipeline is a wonderful idea on paper. But those Frenchmen who have had some acquaintance with the Arab world (and they include diplomats as well as businessmen) are privately convinced that the Arabs of the Middle East, whose fanaticism should never be underesti-

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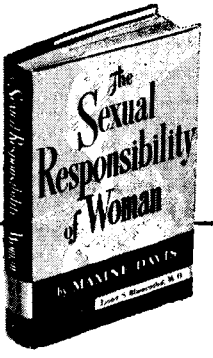

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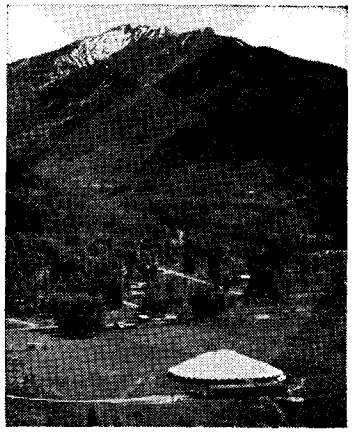

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mated, would rather blow up their own oil wells than tolerate the idea of Middle Eastern oil being channeled through a pipeline controlled by Israel. In practice, therefore, the only oil the French could get through such a pipeline would be from non-Arabic Iran, which has never been a major supplier of petroleum to France.

The oil France needs

What has made the French so nervous about Nasser and the Middle East is not the Algerian revolt or even the Voice of the Arabs radio. It is France's almost total dependence on the oil of the Middle East. The countries of Western Europe get, on the average, some 72 per cent of their oil from the Middle East. But France gets 92 per cent of its oil from this part of the world — the highest percentage for any country in Europe.

In a pinch, with the Suez Canal out of action and the pipelines cut, Britain can increase its supplies from Venezuela, where Shell has important holdings. The Germans, with their massive dollar reserves, can increase their imports of American oil. But the French have no easy way out. If they cannot get oil from the Middle East, and above all from the Iraq Petroleum Company (in which France has a 23.7 per cent interest), they must get it from the Caribbean or the United States — and pay for it in all too scarce sterling or dollars.

This extremely vulnerable situation has had two far-reaching results in France. It has brought France perilously close to national bankruptcy. And it has engendered a new outburst of anti-Americanism.

The strains on the budget

The grave economic crisis which France is facing is due primarily to the Mollet government's insistence on doing everything at once. It has intensified a war in Algeria that now costs the French Treasury a billion dollars a year. It has at the same time insisted on maintaining the already high level of French capital investment in industry and construction (18 per cent of the national income in 1956). It has, to appease the Socialist vote, introduced a number of welfare projects that have piled new expenses onto a groaning national budget.

Furthermore, it imported sizable quantities of foreign foodstuffs to

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make up for the disastrous frosts of February, 1956, and to keep the cost of living down. To try to make the average Frenchman forget the magnitude of the Suez debacle, it has allowed the importation of millions of tons of foreign gasoline and put only limited restrictions on the sale of gasoline to nonessential drivers.

The combined effect of these measures has been to place a dangerous strain on France's capital resources and monetary reserves. Last year's budget deficit reached a new high — $3 billion, or 26 per cent of the total budget. Even more serious was France's balance of trade. From a trade surplus of some $175 million in 1955, France accumulated a trade deficit of almost a billion dollars in 1956. By the end of last year France's dollar reserves were down to a mere $300 million.

Ramadier's gamble

In the face of this critical situation one Frenchman at least has managed to preserve his imperturbability — the Finance Minister himself. A pipe-smoking sexagenarian from the Auvergne, Paul Ramadier is a staunch Socialist Party member who has more than once shouldered thankless tasks with the stolid resignation of a Percheron. As Minister of Supply immediately after the Liberation, when everything in France was rationed and the French were short of food, heat, and clothing, his plodding efforts made him unpopular. Perhaps it is the memory of those stark days which persuaded the Finance Minister to do nothing that might force his countrymen to pull in their belts now.

Unlike Mendès-France or Edgar Faure, Ramadier is no financial wizard. But what he lacks in knowledge he has tried to make up with a real poker player's front. He has juggled with the cost-of-living index in an effort to prove to his fellow citizens that the rise in the cost of living was a mirage. Essentially his gamble is to gain time and to pay for the present by drawing on the future. The future in this case is the prospect of a further expansion of French industrial production and agriculture, which in 1956 brought the national income to a new high of $52 billion, an increase of 9 per cent over 1955.

These encouraging statistics have persuaded Ramadier and the opti-

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mists who surround him that once the oil from the Middle East is flowing again and the new harvest is in, the very buoyancy of the French economy will contribute to stabilize prices by absorbing the demand.

Oil under the Sahara?

A single statistic will suffice to make clear what order of investments the French are envisaging for the future of their African possessions, and indirectly of France herself. In the last three years, four French petroleum companies with concessions in the Sahara have spent over $100 million just to fathom the reservoirs lying beneath its sands. The strikes they have already made have led some French technicians to believe that the Sahara might have as much oil underneath it as Canada, or even Saudi Arabia.

But to have a clearer idea they want to invest $350 million just for this year — a sum comparable to what the U.S. oil companies invested in Canada in 1953, when the first big oil strikes were made in the region of Calgary. This is a sum of money that at present far exceeds France's already strained capital resources. What France cannot put up herself she must get either from her European partners or from the United States.

Of these two possibilities the French would infinitely prefer the first. The reason is that any large-scale American investment in oil prospecting in the Sahara would almost certainly involve Aramco, and the French already suspect this powerful oil consortium of maintaining sinister relations with the Algerian rebel leaders in exile.

This is, of course, only one example of the gulf that now separates Washington from Paris. After twelve years of post-war dependence the French have lost much of their faith in the United States. In the French view, the endless backtrackings of Secretary Dulles, the opportunistic declarations and foreign odysseys of Vice President Nixon, and the nebulous moralism and sanctimonious righteousness of President Eisenhower himself have aroused a profound sense of disillusionment with the United States. The French no longer think of Uncle Sam as an unfailingly generous Santa Claus; rather they now regard the United States as a mighty vessel momentarily adrift and pilotless.

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ATLANTIC Repartee

LETTERS TO AND FROM THE EDITOR

Mistreatment of Indians

SIR:

Edith Mirrielees' article, "The Cloud of Mistrust," in the February issue of the *Atlantic* seems to me to be a true masterpiece of moderation and of understatement, accomplishing its objective more than an aggressive article might have done. There is not any proposition or fact contained in it which can be challenged except by those who are critical of the present Indian Bureau policies, including the so-called relocation program. From the Department of the Interior itself or any of its spokesmen, there can be no controverting of anything in the Mirrielees article. I state this from a knowledge of the whole record, from 1950 to the present.

What I *do* point out is the rather extreme charity (toward our government and its present doings) of Miss Mirrielees. I give only a few examples.

1. The congressional declaration (in House Concurrent Resolution 108, in 1953) of repudiation of all Indian obligations was in reality nothing except a declaration by the present national Administration. It was put across by the Administration almost entirely without hearings and without any meaningful floor discussion, at the end of a recessing Congress.

2. The enactment identified by Miss Mirrielees as Public Law 280 constituted a repudiation in principle of not one but all of the treaty obligations and other contractual commitments of the United States toward the more than two hundred Indian tribes. Nothing comparable to this repudiation of national honor and commitment is to be found in the Indian record since the General Allotment Act of 1887. But there is this difference between the two repudiations: the General Allotment Act was debated with passion, was resisted by the Indian tribes up to a Pilate-like hands-off decision by the Supreme Court; that which may be called the Eisenhower repudiation (a "most un-Christian bill" he termed it and then made it law) took place almost in silence, with no Court contest, and with nothing but an amazed mystification on the part of the Indian tribes.

3. The next underemphasis of the Mirrielees article relates to an action by the Administration correlative with its hurried release to white interests of Indian lands — a release of 1.6 million acres in the last four years. What I refer to is the freezing of the Indian revolving loan fund — an administrative nullification of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. This virtual confiscation of about $8 million of Indian-owned funds, designed by Congress to furnish capital goods to tribes and individuals among the Indians, is correlative with the so-called withdrawal and relocation programs.

4. I would mention as another omission and understatement the Administration's successful drive to atomize the Menominee and Klamath communal holdings. Here were not Indians with an inadequate land base or poor, desperate Indians, but Indians with corporate resources bases adequate for a hundred years to come and needed by the states of Wisconsin and Oregon. When Commissioner Emmons defends his Indian dissolution program in general by referring to the inadequate resources bases of many tribes, let us remember that a main drive of the Administration has been to dissolve the adequate resources bases of the Menominees and Klamaths. The states of Wisconsin and Oregon have risen up against this drive because it hurt their white domestic economy at its vitals, and not only the tribes.

My final remark about Miss Mirrielees' charitable understatements is that the pressure of forced land alienation and overpersuaded urban relocation is justified in the minds of the Administration by the assumed necessity of wiping out, pulverizing utterly, the communal loyalties of one of our minorities. The entire event is going to be appreciated in history as the renewal of an ancient assault against human diversity, the Indians being again, as in the years before 1930, the preferred victims.

JOHN COLLIER
Ranchos de Taos, N.M.

SIR:

I have read "The Cloud of Mistrust" several times and would like to thank you for publishing an article on the American Indians' plight. I would like to add a few ideas or sentiments of my own, as I'm an Indian of a small part and so is my husband, and know things we have had to contend with because we are part Indian.

First they said to give up your customs and your arts and become white men — get an education. I did this because I was living in a white household since birth, as my own mother died.

But my husband was a little more

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Why does Chrissi's mother cry?

Chrissi, at eight, is a charming little lady, with pretty brown hair and sparkling eyes. She attends school faithfully and is adored by her family. Why, then, should Chrissi's mother cry?

The answer is simple. At night, Chrissi sometimes whimpers with cold and hunger. During the days she must keep active to stay warm. She has no toys, nothing to ease the cruel struggle against privation.

Home for this tragic family is a "space" — not a room — in a refugee camp near Athens. In poverty-ridden Greece, badly torn by war, earthquakes and the austerity of economic rehabilitation, Chrissi's father earns $1.00 a day, hardly enough to provide even the most meager subsistence.

Chrissi's parents can only pray that someone — somewhere — will help their daughter find escape from her grim and painful life.

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rebellious and still continued his hunting and fishing until he was sent to a disciplinary school. He lived on bread and water for two weeks and had to get up at 4:30 to help milk cows. He behaved better in order to get food and was allowed to come home. But this treatment made him hate white people more and never trust them.

Now we are married and have five nice healthy children. They are scolded because they are Indians and like living along a stream and watching the birds and the snow falling.

We are teaching them the arts we know, which are few compared to those of the old days, because no matter how much education you have you are still an Indian. If you have money you are a good Indian as long as you spend it freely; but try to accomplish something for yourself, then they just watch and wait to make trouble. We two are Indians with no reservation of our own to live on; but why not let the poor Indians have the small portion of land that they have from long ago? And let us never let them call us savages again after these long, savage, distrustworthy white man years who have never kept a promise to an American Indian which they take from us to give to all the foreign countries who mention discomforts.

I could give scores of injustices to Klamath Indians, now that they are getting a little money. How they are hid in a dark section of a street, how legal fees are raised when you are Indians.

I just wish I had money to care for all Indian orphans so they won't fall into hands of white people who take them just for the money and nothing else.

MRS. CHARLES S. WRIGHT
Bly, Ore.

The Captain's Leg

SIR:

I should like to add a few more words to the unprofitable discussion of Ahab's artificial limb.

Ron McCandlish, YN2, U.S. Navy, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in his letter in the February "Atlantic Repartee" called attention to Mr. Kazin's error in his observation that Ahab "stomps along on his wooden leg."

U.S. Navy's McCandlish then proceeded to put his foot in his mouth twice before he finished his letter, leaving himself without a leg to stand on. First he said Ahab's leg was

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"made of ivory" and then at the end of his letter stated that it was a "whalebone artificial limb."

Certainly Ahab did not have a leg fashioned from ivory, which is dentin, as there are no teeth in a sperm whale large enough for making artificial limbs. Ahab, as Melville states, used "the polished bone of the Sperm Whale's jaw." His leg was not made of whalebone as McCandlish states, for sperm whales do not possess whalebone, a substance which is found only in the baleen whales and hardly suitable for an artificial leg.

GEORGE W. DUNCAN
Richmond, Va.

Melville's description of Captain Ahab's prosthesis is supplied by Alfred Kazin from Chapter XXVIII of *Moby-Dick* as follows: ". . . the barbaric white leg upon which he partly stood . . . this ivory leg had at sea been fashioned from the polished bone of the Sperm Whale's jaw." — THE EDITORS

In Behalf of Missouri

SIR:

An interesting article on opera in America ("The Future of American Opera," by Lincoln Kirstein) in the March *Atlantic* discusses the work of Virgil Thomson and repeatedly speaks of Thomson's "Kansas boyhood" and his musical roots in the traditional hymns of that area. Mr. Thomson was born in Missouri, went to the Irving grade school, the Central High School, and the Junior College in Kansas City, Missouri, and received his musical foundation from one of Kansas City's best musicians.

Greater Kansas City is in Missouri. The traditional hymnology to which your author refers is characteristic of the old South, and flourished in "Southern" Missouri rather than "Northern" Kansas. Mr. Thomson is one of Missouri's distinguished Pulitzer Prize winners; and we have no intention of surrendering him to Kansas!

RUTH MARY WEEKS
Kansas City, Mo.

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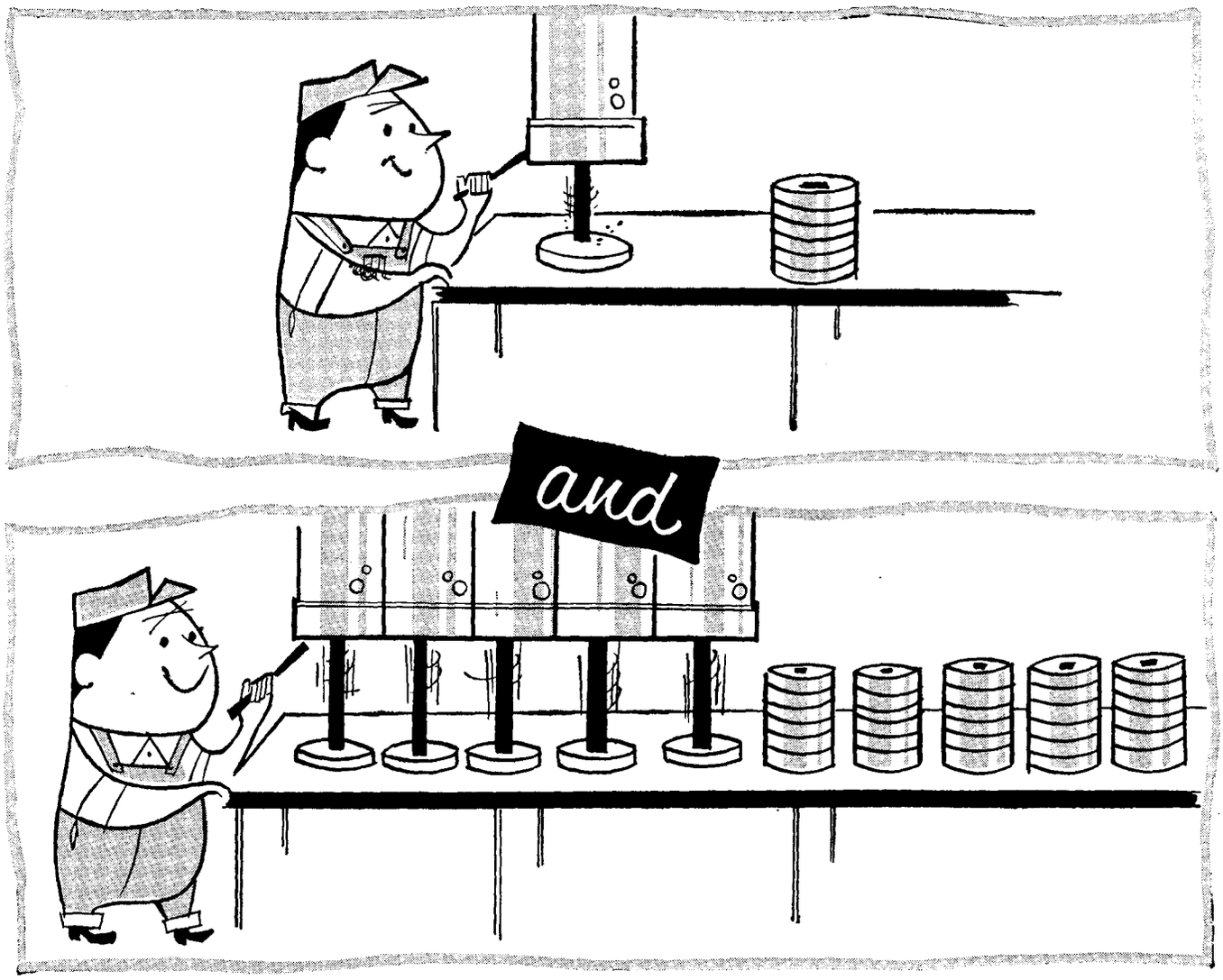

is to distinguish between Production and Productivity.

Higher production could mean nothing more than additional employees turning out the SAME AMOUNT of goods per employee.

Higher productivity means MORE goods turned out per employee.

Higher productivity started when some human being took a piece of stone broader than his hand and scooped more dirt with this tool than he could with bare fingers.

Productivity is raised today when management invents, buys, and engineers into manufacturing processes new tools to increase its employees' output. Increased productivity raises the standard of living by raising earning power.

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English-born but now an American citizen, ALISTAIR COOKE *first came to this country as a Commonwealth Fellow. Since 1948 he has been chief American correspondent of the* Manchester Guardian, *and the most popular commentator on American affairs for BBC. American audiences know him as the master of ceremonies on* Omnibus; *American readers appreciate him for his book* One Man's America *and for his friendly portraits of men who were dear to him: Charlie Chaplin and Henry L. Mencken.*

EPITAPH FOR A TOUGH GUY

by ALISTAIR COOKE

THIRTY years ago, toward the end of the first act of one of those footling country-house comedies which kept up the pretense that the First World War had merely grazed the Edwardian era, a dark-haired juvenile in an ascot and a blue blazer loped through the French windows and tossed off an invitation that was to become immortal: "Tennis, anyone?" Possibly he did not coin the phrase, but he glorified the type that used it, if lithe young men with brown eyes and no discoverable occupation can ever be said to go to glory, on stage or off. This young man, whose performance the late Alexander Woollcott wrote "could be mercifully described as inadequate," seemed to be cast by fortune for the role of a Riviera fixture. His middle name was de Forest. His father was a prominent New York surgeon, his mother a portrait painter of socialite children. He himself had spent a year or two at one of the better private schools and was intended, by everybody but himself, for Yale. If the matinee matrons had any misgivings about the manliness of their hero they had the reassurance of a program note to the effect that the scar on his upper lip came from a wound received in naval combat.

Ten or more years later he gave currency to another phrase, with which the small fry of the English-speaking world brought the neighborhood sneak to heel: "Drop the gun, Looey!"

Could both these characters be Bogart, the cryptic Hemingway tough, the huddled man in the trench coat who singed the bad and the beautiful with the smoke he exhaled from his nostrils? Could any actor, no matter how lucky in his parts, how wide the gamut of his ambition, swing so successfully between the poles of make-believe represented by "Tennis, anyone?" and "Drop the gun, Looey"? He could and did. Mainly because between the nineteen twenties and the thirties the world was in for one of those ideological wrenches which, in destroying a social structure, suddenly date more symbols of it than prime ministers and courtesans, not least the prevailing fashion in romantic actors. And, coincidentally, because our tennis player had a sardonic streak in him off stage that was just what the age of disillusion ordered.

Bogart would have been the first man to question that youth ever dropped its bloom on him. But it obscured, in a smooth skin, bold eyes, and a lid of black hair, his essential character and its marvelous adaptability to one of the more glamorous neuroses of the incoming day and age: that of the unfooled "private eye," the neutral skeptic in a world exploding with crusades and the treachery they invite. He probably had no notion, in his endless strolls across the stage drawing-rooms of the twenties, that he was being saved and soured by Time to become the romantic democratic answer to Hitler's New Order. Such calculations belong to social historians, not to their subjects. Not, certainly, to

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an actor who had had his troubles with the bartender's tab and who was grateful to take any part for which his dark and glossy appearance qualified him. He was always content to nestle in the camouflage of any fictional type that came his way, provided the manager paid him and left him to himself; a very complex man, gentle at bottom and afraid to seem so.

He was never earnest about the choice of parts "worthy" of him, and I doubt he would ever have joined group theaters or studios dedicated to the purifying or solemnizing of the mummer's art. He was temperamentally disinclined to identify the actor with a priest or social reformer. He spoke his mind very freely on this as on most other subjects and he was consequently rarely idolized by aesthetes or the New Deal young as a serious actor, at least not in his own country. But it is a hazard peculiar to cultists in the arts — that is to say, to highbrows — that unless they keep their transatlantic signals open and alert, they tend to canonize foreign talents that are rejected on the home ground as commercial hacks. There was, I remember, a delightful period in the late thirties and early forties when American highbrows yearned for a native naturalistic actor as mighty as Jean Gabin. Their counterparts in Paris were meanwhile lamenting the early demise of Gabin as a "serious" talent and panting over Bogart for what the critic of *Le Matin* called his "vitalisme, tendre et profond."

I once mentioned this awesome Gallic reputation to Bogie and he was greatly amused by it. Although he privately described himself as "Democrat in politics, Episcopalian by birth, dissenter by disposition," he looked on acting as a trade like any other, though one calling for considerable craft and discipline. He practiced it with great competence, and competence was something he admired immoderately in any field, from crooning to seamanship, drinking to statesmanship. He was, in fact, a professional, a man who can do his best work when he doesn't feel like it. Being also a clear-minded man of deep and stubborn convictions, he was something of a freak in the Hollywood factory in knowing where his craft ended and where his private life or his politics should take over without let or hindrance. His admiration of Roosevelt, his concern over the Bricker Amendment, his steady and withering contempt for McCarthy, had no more to do with his acceptance of a part as a Wall Street broker or a drunken sea captain than a trucking company's contract with a newspaper publisher depends on the political stripe of the editorials.

In a fuzzier man, or a more cunning one, this separation of the citizen and the craftsman could have been a very handy sort of cowardice. Bogart was quite clear about the point where his conscience could not follow his fame. He once put into Newport, California, harbor and took his skipper along with him into the yacht club bar. An official at last beckoned him aside and intimated that a respectable yacht club was no place to bring his "paid hands." Bogie called for his bar check and on the back of it wrote out his resignation. The effect was hardly instantaneous on the Board which, for all I know, may never have changed a rule since the time of Canute. But it changed this one a month or two later by a majority vote.

So it is fair to guess that far back in the Frederick Lonsdale era he was always his own man. He no doubt stood in the wings in his blazer chuckling over the asininities on stage, just as he lately complained that he could not walk the streets of New York without having truck drivers and assorted brats spring their forefingers and give him the "ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah" tommy-gun treatment. On Fifth Avenue two years ago, a wholesome young cop testing store locks at two in the morning moved up on him from behind. "Everything all right, Mr. Bogart?" Everything was fine, and Bogie sighed after his retreating bulk: "It does no good. I haven't played a gangster or a dick in nine years."

But this was his most famous self: the two-faced cynic who robbed the banker and the grafter with equal grace, who was sometimes a heel and sometimes a big-city stand-in for the United States cavalry, but who was always the derisive foe of the law in its official forms. The enjoyment of this character from Glasgow to Singapore was assured by the supporting artistic fact that here was a universal type of our rebellious age but one that never appeared in life quite so perfect, never quite so detached in its malice, so inured to corruption, so self-assured in its social stance before the diffident, the pompous, and the evil. It would be tempting — and the French will be tempted — to write of the Bogart character as the archetype of the Outsider, but he packed the more explosive social threat of the Insider gone sour. He was, in short, a romantic hero inconceivable in any time but ours.

2

And just what was this new sort of hero, whose originality I have hinted at in a menacing phrase or two? Looked at after twenty years' familiarity, it is a surprise to see that he is a direct descendant of Sherlock Holmes, as indeed are most fictional private detectives invented since Conan Doyle cast the original mold: a depressed, eccentric bachelor of vast, odd knowledge, whose intelligence is poised over the plot like a dagger, which in the moment of resolution slices through the butter of the surrounding confusion. This is the elementary recipe for all the moderns, from Perry Mason to Philip Marlowe. Where Holmes knew the soil classification of the Home Counties, Bogart — sharing an unfriendly drink with Sidney Greenstreet — sees a ship slink by on the horizon and calls off the full-load displacement, overall length, gun caliber, muzzle

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velocity. Holmes possessed an uncanny sense of the whereabouts of distressed gentlewomen and had memorized the Paddington train schedules against the day of their rescue. Bogart knows all about hotels, from Yokohama to New York: the tactical geography of suites, connecting doors, and fire escapes, how to confuse the room clerk and evade the house dick, determine the clientele by a glance around the lobby, know who is up to no good and where she is likely to be.

The field maneuvers may be different from those in Holmes's day, and the villain is more socially mobile, but since Sir Arthur we have not changed the three essential ingredients of the private eye. He must be a bachelor, with the bachelor's harum-scarum availability at all hours (William Powell's marriage to Myrna "Nora" Loy, a wistful concession to the family trade, fooled nobody.) He must have an inconspicuous fund of curious knowledge, which in the end is always crucially relevant. He must pity the official guardians of the law.

Of course, the twentieth century has grafted some interesting personality changes on the original. Holmes was an eccentric in the Victorian sense, a man with queer hobbies — cocaine was lamentable but pardonably melodramatic — whose social code was essentially that of the ruling classes. He was, in a way, the avenging squire of the underworld ready to administer a horsewhipping to the outcasts who were never privileged by birth to receive it from their fathers. Bogart is a displaced person whose present respectability is uncertain, a classless but well-contained vagabond who is not going to be questioned about where he came from or where he is going. ("I came to Casablanca for the waters." "But there are no waters in Casablanca." "I was misinformed.")

As a Victorian bachelor-hero, Holmes must be presumed to be asexual. Bogart too is a lone wolf, but with a new and equal stress on the noun. His general view of women implies that he was brought up, sexually speaking, no earlier than the twenties. Hence he is unshockable and offhand, and, one gathers, a very devil with the women, who is saved from absurdity by never having time to prove it. ("Sorry, angel, I have a pressing date with a fat man.") Unlike Holmes, he cannot claim even the castle of a carefully cluttered set of rooms. He is always on the move, and his only domestic base is a fairly seedy hotel bedroom with an unmade bed (this is called audience identification, and to tell the truth is the sort of independent base of operations most college boys and many rueful husbands would like to have). Yet somehow, somewhere, in his baffling past he learned the habits of the *haut monde*. And his audience is constantly flattered by the revelation that a sudden call to dine with a jewel importer at the Ritz will find him shaved and natty and handling the right knives with easy boredom.

It is a gorgeous conception, fulfilling more fantasies in the male audience than a Freudian could shake a stick at, and it was given a very entertaining dry run in the appearances of Warren William as Perry Mason. But it was always thought of as B-film material until Bogart turned it into box office. The change may have been due in the first place to what Peter Ustinov has called his "enormous presence," the simple, inexplicable characteristic of natural stars: you cannot take your eyes off them. (No one in the history of the movies has made smoking a cigarette a more deadly and fascinating thing to watch.) It was also due to Bogart's graduation from mere gangster parts just when parliamentary Europe was caving in to gangsters on a grand scale. He is the first romantic hero who used the gangster's means to achieve our ends. And this character was suddenly very precious in the age of violence, for it satisfied a quiet, desperate need of the engulfed, ordinary citizen. When Hitler was acting out scripts more brutal and obscene than anything dreamed of by Chicago's North Side or the Warner Brothers, Bogart was the only possible antagonist likely to outwit him and survive. What was needed was no Ronald Colman, Leslie Howard, or other knight of the boudoir, but a conniver as subtle as Goebbels. Bogart was the very tough gent required, and to his glory he was always, in the end, on our side.

3

The way he came to achieve this character and its renown is a pretty irony, and he himself put it all down to luck. Bogart was just as old as the century, and by the mid-thirties he was getting to be a little too scarred for a juvenile. He would undoubtedly have faded into the kind of feature player who is never out of a job but never stars in anything and makes a compensating fuss about the size of his name in lights. Robert Sherwood had written *The Petrified Forest* and was looking around for what would now be called an offbeat piece of casting for the part of the listless killer, Duke Mantee. Against the advice of his friends, who remembered Bogart from his tennis racketeering, Sherwood picked the aging juvenile with the scar, the odd lisp, and the look of implied derision. He was an immediate success and was soon whipped out to Hollywood for the movie version. And that led straight to *Dead End* and the glory road. It proved again, what actors rarely admit, that the stars in their courses are nearly always set by the casting directors. A new view of an old face was all it took to change Wallace Beery from a slant-eyed villain into a lovable cuss, to turn Myrna Loy from an "inscrutable," as the word is understood in Oriental melodramas, into a chin-up wife for William Powell, himself transformed by the same insight from a gunman into a teasing com-

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bination of smooth operator and faithful spouse.

Soon the word got back east from Hollywood that Bogart was living out his screen character in a running series of marital brawls with the redoubtable Mayo Methot. "Battling Bogart," the columnists called him when his divorce came up. "Battling Bogart!" groaned his oldest theatrical friend, Clifton Webb, recalling at Christmastime the shock of this fantasy. "Why, any woman could walk all over him. The man's a softie and — I might add — a very gallant one."

This true remark points to yet another "offbeat" role that no producer had the wit to discover: the character of Humphrey Bogart himself. Only once, in *Casablanca*, did the audience see a decent approximation to the melancholy man whose wryness was the mask of an incorruptibility he mocked. He drank and blasphemed and tolerated, even fattened, the newspaper myth of a locker-room tough guy. But this image was the very distorted one of a man who was impulsive and courageous in most matters of principle and was, at the same time, disgusted that our era required such conspicuous forms of protest. He advised young actors, newly transported from a success on Broadway, to "take the big part, but hold off the big house and the Cadillac, or you'll be in hock to the studio for the rest of your life." The only point in making money, he said, was "so you can tell some big shot to go to hell."

When the McCarthy era was incubating in the congressional hearings on the "Hollywood Ten" he recklessly flew to Washington to defend their right to think and say "anything they damn please." (He was aghast to discover when he got there that several of them were down-the-line Communists very coolly exploiting their right of free speech. He thought they were just freewheeling anarchists, like himself.) When it was privately murmured by some studio heads in 1952 that an open embrace of Stevenson might possibly weaken the bonds of a film contract, Bogart and his wife, a female chip off the same block, packed their bags and toured with the Stevenson train. They bowed in small New England towns at all hours and ducked out on the observation platform only when they were asked. They openly scoffed at the presidential qualifications of "the big general." (It wasn't Eisenhower in particular that was Bogart's target; any general would have seemed to him like a man betraying his professional standing.) Bogart was impenitent and scoffing when he died. A bred-in-the-bone iconoclast, they called him. I am not so sure about this.

His iconoclasm was, I suspect, the rather gaudy mask of a conservatism that embarrassed him. Any rebel, said Shaw, has an obligation to replace the conventions he destroys with better ones. It doesn't take a hellion more than twenty years or so to discover that this is not going to happen. He doesn't exactly discover it, but he acts as if he had; that is to say, he falls back with sheepish respect on the code of his elders and mentors, the first code he had learned before he learned to ridicule it. We have all seen this mechanism in the moralizing of aging rakes, whose later Puritanism takes on the bigotry of conversion. I don't think that Bogart had the temperament of a rake but he was an anarchist fairly young and was thrown out of Andover for "irreverence" and "uncontrollable high spirits." He was the last man you'd expect, from his outward manner, to have the pedestrian old-school virtues: loyalty to friends, freedom from malice, a distaste for public gossip, for conspicuous wealth — to name no others. Yet he had them, knew them to be old-fashioned, and kept up his prestige among the young by cockily asserting their opposite. Hollywood's "progress" over twenty years, he remarked, could be measured by the fact that whereas "I came out here with one suit and everybody thought I was a bum; when Brando came out with one sweatshirt, the town drooled over him." He was very vocal about the pretentiousness of the new school of realistic actors. But I think his real complaint was that they wore blue jeans and windbreakers.

I'm afraid he would take it very glumly if he could hear me now saying, what is nothing but the truth, that he had the impulses of a gentleman but was born late enough to squirm over the vocabulary that normally expresses them. I can hardly hear him saying that fidelity to one woman is a married man's duty. But he acted in secret on the conviction. When he had been confined to his home for many months, people used to urge his wife to get out in the evenings, once he was tucked away. He urged her himself, in an offhand way. But I think he was proud that she didn't. A friend asked him, just before he died, why Betty had been out only half a dozen evenings in ten months. He said: "She's my wife and my nurse. So she stays home. Maybe that's the way you tell the ladies from the broads in this town."

One is always reading in obituaries of men who could not abide cant and fearlessly denounced it. Bogart never bothered to denounce it since, no matter how meek its disguise, it was as plainly offensive to him as a bad smell. This hypersensitiveness to pomp made him an impossible man to make up to, to cozen, or to impress. He had the deadly insight that one meets in some drunks who are beginning to get troublesome and whom you hope to appease with cordial approaches. Such men pause long enough in their garrulousness to say quietly, "You don't like me, do you?" So he was also not a man to flatter or — what was harder this last year — to sympathize with.

Before I saw him in the spring of 1956, I had had from a surgeon friend the dimmest prognosis of his condition, which was that of a man still receiving

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massive X-ray treatment weeks after an operation for cancer of the esophagus. I was sorry to have heard this, for it was going to be hard to keep up the usual banter. But there was no strain of any kind, because (I believe) he knew the worst and was resolved to rouse himself for two hours a day to relax with his friends until the end came. We never knew until he died that he had been for many months in the most abominable pain. Another of his triumphant deceptions was that he managed to convince everybody that he was intermittently uncomfortable but not in pain. Throughout the summer he remained a genial skeleton, and when I went up there the last time, at the beginning of June, he was just finishing his will. He spoke of it, and of his illness, and the sudden uselessness of money, with an entirely unforced humor and an equally unforced seriousness; neither with complaint nor with a brave absence of complaint. It is hard for actors to avoid the dramatizing of their emotional life, whether grossly by "living the part" or subtly by sentimental deprecation. Bogart was merely himself, a brave man who had come to terms, as we all may pray to do, with the certain approach of death.

In sum, a vastly more intelligent man than most practitioners of his trade; a touchy man who found the world more corrupt than he had hoped; a man with a tough shell hiding a fine core. He invented the Bogart character and imposed it on a world impatient of men more obviously good. And it fitted his deceptive purpose like a glove. By showily neglecting the outward forms of grace, he kept inferior men at a distance. For he lived in a town crowded by malign flatterers, hypocrites and poseurs, fake ascetics, studio panders, the pimps of the press. From all of them he was determined to keep his secret: the rather shameful secret, in the realistic world we inhabit, of being a gallant man and an idealist.

THE FEVER

by ROBERT GRAVES

WHERE the room may be, I do not know.
It is beamed and parqueted,
With yew logs charring on a broad hearth,
Curtains of taffeta, chairs of cherry,
And a rough wolfskin to lie at ease upon
Naked before the fire in half-darkness;
The shadowy bed behind.

Who she may be I do not know,
Nor do I know her nation.
She is truthful, she is tender,
In everything a woman, but the claws:
Her skin moon-blanched, her arms lissom,
Her tawny tresses hanging free,
Her frown eloquent.

What we do together, that I know;
But when, eludes me;
Whether long ago, one night, or never . . .
Meaning? Meaning in some recess of Time,
Untemporal yet sure . . .
Why should it irk me? Now I must rest —
She says so with her frown.

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The Atomic Energy Commission is one of the most highly charged units now operating in the Capital. It is so today under the chairmanship of Admiral Lewis Strauss just as it was under the chairmanship of David E. Lilienthal when Strauss himself was often a dissenting voice. The Commission spends $2 billion annually, and its decisions may well be a matter of life and death. Under the circumstances, we need the combined wisdom, even including the disagreement, of the five Commissioners, not decisions enforced by the Chairman. WARREN UNNA *of the Washington* Post *has been covering the AEC for the past three years.*

DISSENSION IN THE AEC

by WARREN UNNA

1

WHILE the Atomic Energy Commission has been most successful in controlling nuclear fission for weapons, it has been somewhat less than successful in controlling the human fission within its own ranks: that of AEC Chairman Lewis L. Strauss (pronounced Straws) and Commissioner Thomas E. Murray.

Both men, with markedly similar ways of life and, in some respects, markedly similar philosophies, have been at opposite poles of the atomic orbit since the beginning of the Eisenhower Administration. Now, with Murray's term as Commissioner due to expire June 30, and Strauss' certain to continue for at least another year, the Commission's personality polarization may be coming to an end. This is not necessarily a good thing.

The Atomic Energy Commission watches over a $15 billion public investment. Its major efforts are devoted to the design and manufacture of weapons, the bulwark of our defense against potential and actual enemies. But beyond the preparation of weapons, the AEC is vitally concerned with the peaceful applications of atomic energy: the use of radioactive isotopes in industry, agriculture, and medicine; the use of atomic fuel in generating electricity.

Murray, the last of the Truman appointees to the AEC, is the only one of the five Commissioners who lists himself as a Democrat. Strauss is a Hoover-Taft Republican; retired Studebaker chairman Harold S. Vance is also a Republican; University of Chicago chemist Willard F. Libby usually votes Republican; the late John von Neumann, of the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study, kept his political preference to himself.

Although Murray is anxious to remain on the Commission, few people in Washington think that President Eisenhower will reappoint him to another five-year term, or that Strauss would tolerate it even if the President should get such a notion. Murray has been the only Commissioner to speak out whenever he is persuaded that something alien to the public interest is going on behind the AEC's secrecy-protected doors.

It is ironic that these two Commissioners who have so much in common should hold opposing views. Both are in their sixties. Both are multi-millionaires and highly successful financiers. Strauss started out by drumming up business for his father and uncle's wholesale shoe shop in Richmond, Virginia, and rose to become an investment banking partner with Kuhn, Loeb & Company. Just before joining the Eisenhower Administration, he served as financial adviser to the Rockefellers.

Murray is the son of the man who built the giant power-generating stations in New York State which eventually became the nucleus of the Consolidated Edison network. The father left a $12 million estate. The son, a mechanical engineer with more than two hundred electrical and welding patents to his credit, has carried on and augmented the family's electrical manufacturing business.

Both Strauss and Murray are extremely devout. Strauss, a member of the Reformed Jewish congregation, once taught Sunday School, once was president of New York City's Temple Emanu-El, conducts Friday night and Saturday morning Sabbath services in his home for his family and his guests, and once prepared a beautifully written Bible with his son, so anxious was he for young Lewis to learn to love and appreciate Biblical lore as he did.

Murray, a Roman Catholic with three knighthoods from the Pope and honorary degrees from fifteen Catholic colleges and universities, has a private chapel in both his Long Island home and his Park Avenue apartment, attends Mass at 7:30

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each morning, and takes more than fatherly pride in the fact that two of his eleven children are Jesuit priests.

Despite the current involvement of the AEC's atomic power program in the public versus private power issue, Strauss and Murray are essentially private power men. It was Strauss who, out of loyalty to the White House team if not blind faith in big business, first allowed the Commission to become involved in the notorious and now defunct Dixon-Yates contract for steam-generated power in the Tennessee Valley Authority area. It was Murray who first suggested that the AEC farm out its power needs to private utilities — in the Electric Energy, Inc., plant at Joppa, Illinois, and the Ohio Valley Electric Corporation plant at Portsmouth, Ohio. Murray made both proposals during the last year of the Truman Administration.

Both Strauss and Murray are humanitarians and take enormous pride in the good the atom promises when it is not being devoted to war. Strauss helped to devise President Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace" proposal before the United Nations General Assembly in December, 1953, the main good will plank in the Administration's foreign policy. And he also helped to conceive the "Atoms for Peace" conference in Geneva in August, 1955, which for the first time brought the world's nuclear physicists together to discuss the benefits of the atom. Murray's every speech is in essence a prayer, a plea to make atomic warfare impossible, a plea for world harmony that atomic energy may be devoted to improving the way people live.

Strauss is bald, bespectacled, rather owlish-faced; he has a ramrod posture and a superbly tailored figure. He has fluidity of thought and tongue and an Old World courtliness, but when he is piqued the Strauss expression varies between childish indignation and pouting martyrdom. Strauss claims he never had enemies before coming to Washington. And even his enemies concede his executive brilliance and mastership as a tactician.

At his mother's instigation, Strauss volunteered his services to Herbert Hoover during the Belgian War Relief days and later became Mr. Hoover's private secretary. He was with Mr. Hoover in his Palo Alto, California, home in 1928 the night he was elected President; and with him again in the White House in 1932 when Mr. Hoover learned he was defeated for re-election. Strauss' attraction to science began early when he read a physics primer. When both his parents died of cancer in quick succession, Strauss became interested in an accelerator to develop radioactive isotopes for cancer treatment. As a rear admiral during World War II, he represented Navy interests in the Manhattan Project, the program which produced the A-bomb.

Murray is frail in appearance, bashful in voice and manner. He has a sort of pug face, a friendly twinkle, and his double chin is his one concession to obesity. Unlike Strauss, Murray did go to college, to Yale's Sheffield School of Engineering. But he is proud that he is a second-generation Irishman. He can be as stubborn as he is gentle, and when he is, this Irish comes out and the frail frame throws all its energy into the scrap for God and Country. He frequently has declared, "I won't give up unless they fire me."

Murray's experience has made him well aware of the needs of private enterprise. For ten years he was receiver for New York City's Interborough Rapid Transit subway. Prior to joining the Commission, he was president of the Metropolitan Engineering Company and a director of its parent which makes welding devices and electric switches, the Murray Manufacturing Company. He has been a director of the Chrysler Corporation and a member of its finance committee, a director of the Bank of New York, a trustee of the United Mine Workers welfare fund. His niece married Henry Ford II.

2

The first great storm which followed Strauss' appointment as AEC Chairman was the dismissal of Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer, when he was ruled to be a security risk. Murray, a member of the four-to-one majority against Oppenheimer, went even further than Strauss and his colleagues by branding the scientist "disloyal." Strauss dismissed Murray's zeal as "Jesuitic reasoning" — an opinion shared by a good many others involved in the case. Strauss has particular pride in his academic connections, and some describe the Oppenheimer case as his Achilles' heel. Strauss took what might be termed the rap for the case and describes it as "a tragic thing — I shall have to live with it as long as I live." Yet the case did not originate with Strauss, but with FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover and Attorney General Herbert Brownell, Jr., who went to the President and demanded that the physicist be ousted from his position as a consultant to the AEC and that his "Q" clearance be revoked.

Through the misadvice of AEC General Counsel William Mitchell, Strauss was reluctantly persuaded that Oppenheimer's "Q" clearance could be revoked only after a formal hearing. Actually, the mere termination of Oppenheimer's consultant's contract would have accomplished the same thing. Once the hearing was under way, however, Strauss, with his usual precision, vigor, and no-stone-unturned thoroughness, coöperated with Hoover and Brownell in seeing to it that the government's case could not fail.

Then, as president of the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study, Strauss not only voted to retain Oppenheimer as the Institute's director, but also to raise his salary. He also saw to it that Oppenheimer had a say in the $15,000 Strauss award given to a promising scientist every three years in

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memory of Strauss' parents. Strauss thus displayed another facet of his personality: mercy, generosity, even solicitude — once the enemy is on his knees. Many scientists have never forgiven Strauss for the Oppenheimer case, however, and to appease them he saw to it that the Commission, for the first time in its ten-year history, had two of their representatives on it at the same time: Libby and von Neumann.

In some ways, Murray is now no more of a lone dissenter on an AEC headed by Strauss than Strauss himself was when he served on an AEC headed by David E. Lilienthal. President Truman appointed Strauss to the first Commission when it began in 1946. Three years later, Strauss was before the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy complaining of what he considered to be Lilienthal's one-man rule. A year later, Strauss resigned — partly because of a long scrap with Lilienthal, who opposed going ahead with the development of the H-bomb (Strauss took the matter to Truman and Congress and won); partly because of his firm belief that sending isotopes to Norway for testing jet plane engines would endanger the nation's security (Strauss took the matter to Congress and lost). Looking back upon his record during the first Commission, Strauss is particularly proud of his plea for the H-bomb and his insistence that this country set up a weapons detection system. Because of the latter, the United States was able to pick up the first Russian A-bomb detonation in 1949 and alert itself to the atomic weapons race.

Similarly Murray, during his term, has pushed establishment of the nation's huge weapons stockpile and seen to it that there is a uranium procurement program with enough incentive behind it to ensure the United States a practically limitless supply of fissionable fuel.

3

Why, in the light of the many things they have in common, are Strauss and Murray at swords' points so much of the time? Although they live within almost wall-to-wall proximity of each other on the eighth floor of Washington's Shoreham Hotel, they take separate elevators. And not too long ago Strauss had Commission personnel bring him Murray's long-distance phone call record so that he might learn with whom Murray had been talking.

The trouble began when Murray sensed that Strauss had come to conceive of himself as the Commission and had very little use for the services of the AEC's other four members. Strauss had been made the President's assistant for atomic energy matters as soon as Eisenhower took office. A few months later he was given his "second hat," that of AEC Chairman.

The Strauss-Murray differences grew during the hearings on the 1954 Atomic Energy Act in which Strauss, anxious to have complete authority over AEC security cases, asked Congress to make him "principal officer" of the five heretofore coequal Commissioners. Strauss argued that some of the secrets he picked up in the White House as the President's atomic energy assistant with a side seat on the National Security Council could not always be passed along to the boys on the Commission. Strauss declared there might come a future time when a majority of the Commission would decide that one of its members should not be granted full access to the nation's top atomic secrets.

Congress, which had established the commission system to gain the advantage of five men's thoughts, rather than one, compromised on Strauss' "principal officer" request and allowed the AEC Chairman instead to become "official spokesman" for his colleagues. Commissioner Eugene M. Zuckert, who once declared, "We ought to get ballet slippers," allowed his term to expire and quietly returned to his Washington management consultancy. Commissioner Henry D. Smyth, weary of learning what the Commission had done through his morning newspaper, resigned and returned to the academic life at Princeton. Commissioner Joseph Campbell resigned to become Comptroller General.

This left only Murray of the pre-Strauss appointees, and Murray declared: "I am accused of not playing on the team. I've worked on a team all my life; but when something comes up and I don't agree, I'm not going to take it blindly just because the Chairman (through his other offices) tells me it's what the President wants."

Strauss' personal public relations assistant, Everett Holles, counters: "Murray hasn't been just one against Lewis L. Strauss; he's been one against the Commission. He has taken a completely 'anti' attitude." Among AEC employees, Murray is now referred to as the "enemy" and it has been made clear to them that they must have nothing to do with his camp if they mean to get on.

In 1955, when the Democrats had replaced the Republican majority in Congress, the so-called "Murray Amendment" was tacked on as a rider to the AEC's appropriation bill. It compelled Strauss, as Chairman, to give his fellow Commissioners "full access" to all information involving AEC business. Murray had submitted a long list to the Joint Committee detailing those AEC matters Strauss had not informed him of. The list included everything from the Dixon-Yates contract, which Strauss presented to the Commission as a *fait accompli*, to the atomic peace ship, which Murray earlier had refused to testify on since he had yet to be told what it was all about. Again last year, Murray disclosed AEC matters which Strauss had still not filled him in on. But with the "Murray Amendment" already on the books, the Joint Committee could only ruefully conclude that it had no police powers — and had to let it go at that.

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The Commission meetings where Strauss and Murray confront each other sometimes are so bitter that a stenographer has to be summoned to be sure the charges and countercharges are recorded verbatim.

One particularly acrid series of meetings involved security. Strauss, ordinarily extremely security-conscious, has had a different attitude toward the British. After a red-carpet reception in England in 1955, including family lunch with the Queen, Strauss came home and helped smother a combined FBI-AEC report questioning the adequacy of British atomic security. Last year, in what Congressman Cole, former Republican Chairman of the Joint Committee and a friend of Strauss, termed a *direct violation of the intent of Congress*, Strauss quietly put through an amendment to our bilateral agreement with Britain regarding the peaceful uses of atomic energy. The amendment permits exchange of military information, specifically regarding the atomic propulsion mechanism on the submarine *Nautilus*. Because of the fury from both sides of the political aisle on this one, Strauss held up the actual exchange of information. And Her Majesty's First Sea Lord, Admiral Mountbatten, did not take the trip on the *Nautilus* which he had been booked for.

Declassification is another big point of contention between Strauss and Murray. Strauss, under frequent goading from Senator Anderson, the Democratic Joint Committee Chairman during the 84th Congress, appointed a special team of declassifiers and periodically announced that so many thousands of secret atomic documents had now been gone through, of which so many thousand could now be declassified. A great many secrets involving the peaceful uses of atomic energy were declassified at the 1955 "Atoms for Peace" conference in Geneva. But the totals of items still held secret are never given in the Strauss declassification announcements.

Anyway, Murray has no toleration of what some call the Strauss "numbers game." Murray is for declassifying all peaceful aspects of atomic energy, leaving only the military secrets in the combination safes. He firmly believes that the enemy, and even our allies, have most of the information anyway. He thinks the only ones kept from it are the American citizens who paid for the discoveries and might well be making use of them in the medical, industrial, and agricultural applications of the atom. On the other hand, Strauss feels there are areas where military and peaceful atomic secrets overlap and for this reason the peaceful secrets have to be kept locked up.

Strauss was hard put to it, however, in explaining why the University of Indiana's Hermann J. Muller, a Nobel Prize geneticist, was prevented by the AEC from appearing in person at the Geneva conference and giving a reading of his paper on the dangerous effects of radioactivity. The AEC tried to make it appear that the United Nations had suppressed Muller. But the UN would have none of this and pointed its accusation right back at the AEC. Murray stayed on the sidelines in this one.

By all odds the most dramatic Strauss-Murray clash in open view occurred during the more than year-long arguments in 1954 and 1955 over the Dixon-Yates contract. Dixon-Yates called for a $107,250,000 steam-generating (non-atomic) power plant to be built and owned by private enterprise on the Arkansas side of the Mississippi River, across from Memphis. It was to feed power into the TVA system to "replace" power TVA was supplying AEC installations some 180 miles upriver. TVA people saw it as a clever move by the Administration to break up the government's biggest public power system.

The contract was finally canceled when congressional Democrats found that one of the key advisers to both the AEC and the Bureau of the Budget on the matter was at the same time vice president of the First Boston Corporation, a Wall Street investment house which had a considerable financial stake in seeing that the contract went through. Dixon-Yates and the Oppenheimer case, by Strauss' own admission, have been the sources of his greatest grief as Chairman. Yet Dixon-Yates was actually started by the Bureau of the Budget and the White House, just as Oppenheimer had been started by the FBI and Justice Department.

At any event, Murray was furious with Strauss for embroiling the AEC in politics for the first time in its history — and said so. Murray thought the AEC's serious responsibilities in developing weapons were being sidetracked — and also said so. Strauss avowed otherwise, and at one memorable point the Chairman paraded into the Capitol's Old Supreme Court Chamber followed by an entourage of department heads, attorneys, public relations men, and workmen in overalls bearing wooden crates and grocery boxes full of top-secret folders.

"Who ordered this physical display?" demanded Senator Anderson, then the Joint Committee Chairman.

"I did," said Strauss, flushing. He then proceeded to point to a six-inch pile of documents on the witness table before him. This, he explained, represented the Commission's preoccupation with Dixon-Yates matters during the first few months of 1955. And that, he said, pointing at the crates and grocery boxes, represented the Commission's preoccupation with its regular business.

During another round in the Dixon-Yates fight, Murray in his turn followed Strauss to the witness table and bluntly stated that the Chairman had taken it upon himself to make changes in the AEC's proposed contract with the TVA without consulting the rest of the Commission. Chairman Strauss, his dark eyes flashing fire, came running up from his corner of the Old Supreme Court Chamber, grabbed

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a microphone at the other end of the witness table, and outshouting Murray declared he couldn't allow such testimony to go into the record unchallenged. At the end of the session, Mrs. Strauss followed the Chairman from the hearing room whispering, "You were too much of a gentleman. You shouldn't have been so nice to him."

Strauss' difficulties over Dixon-Yates weren't all with Murray. When the Joint Committee learned that the Commission had voted on Dixon-Yates matters the very morning of the day Strauss testified that the contract hadn't been discussed for months, Senator Gore mused: "It's rather remarkable that a discussion was held, a motion made and a vote taken, and yet that very afternoon Mr. Strauss couldn't recall it." Strauss then went into a nit-picking argument that he had only testified he couldn't "recall any discussions" on Dixon-Yates matters being held.

4

During the past year and a half, Murray has made three major public proposals on atomic matters, all of which have been just as publicly opposed by Strauss and the rest of the Commission.

In November, 1955, Murray proposed a mid-Pacific "meeting at the atomic summit" in the hope that a firsthand sight of an exploding superbomb would deter policy makers, both in this country and abroad, from thinking in terms of future war. The morning preceding Murray's evening speech, Strauss called the other Commissioners into emergency session. He then issued a statement to the effect that Murray's proposal had been considered and voted down months ago as "contrary to the best judgment of the AEC." And anyway, he declared, the Russians had witnessed this country's 1946 (baby bomb) tests in the Pacific without any noticeable deterrence. All this rebuttal to Murray's speech was given the public before the Murray speech had actually been delivered.

The next day, Air Force Secretary Donald A. Quarles, who had not been taken into Strauss' counsel, generally endorsed the Murray proposal at a National Press Club lunch. Quarles later got the word and hastily announced he had been giving only his private opinion and wouldn't have made any statement at all had he known it was the subject of an intra-AEC dispute.

In February and April, 1956, first in executive session before the Joint Committee and then in public, Murray formulated the ban on superbomb tests which later in the year was to be given a somewhat garbled endorsement by Adlai E. Stevenson. Although the Strauss camp suspected Murray of planting his ideas with the Democratic candidate, Murray actually was quite annoyed with Stevenson for taking on something he didn't understand.

Murray's proposal, unlike the various Stevenson versions, was not fuzzy. The Commissioner said the United States, unilaterally, should call a halt to its superbomb tests since the superbombs in the stockpile were already big enough and we couldn't, with a humanitarian conscience, drop them on civilian population centers anyway. Then Murray called for a "rational armament," one in which the United States would develop and test small — tactical — atomic warheads. These, he said, would prove sufficiently powerful to deter any enemy from thinking it could push around this country and its allies.

When questioned by the Joint Committee on whether our military policy didn't already include such small-scale armament, Murray testified: "I know of no policy." He told Congress that as far as he, an Atomic Commissioner, knew, the Pentagon was merely shouting to make the bombs bigger and bigger and the AEC was dutifully filling out the orders in its bomb factories.

Strauss, in the President's name, later issued a White House statement declaring the tests an "indispensable part of our defense program." But the statement did not face up to Murray's proposition for cutting down on the big tests (which produce the harmful radioactive fall-out) and increasing the development and tests of smaller weapons.

Subsequent to the Murray proposal, Strauss, and then the President, tried to sell Congress and the public on the idea of a "clean" bomb, a term which Eisenhower once carelessly used but which Strauss has scrupulously never used. This is a bomb whose internal make-up is not so disposed to producing strontium-90 and the other deadly radioactive fission elements. It is also one which, when dropped high enough, tends to cut down on purely local fall-out. Murray was unimpressed with the "clean" bomb. As the first member of the Commission to warn of the cancer-producing qualities of strontium-90, once it finds its way into the human bone, he has also been the only member of the Commission to footnote his dissent in the AEC's semiannual report on the fall-out danger.

The AEC has failed to indicate how it would rid the superbomb of its A-bomb trigger and thus make the "clean" bomb really clean of fission products. The Joint Committee knows of no way this could be done. Nor has there been any sign from the Pentagon that it would order any of these "clean" bombs. From a military point of view, the dirtier the bomb the more economically valuable it becomes as a strategic weapon. Overriding all "clean" bomb skepticism is the argument, "What if the enemy won't play according to the same rules?"

Murray's third major proposal came in February, 1956. As a professional power engineer, he declared the AEC's atomic power program was pretty much a figment of its own imagination and would con-

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tinue to be so until the government stepped in to build the first commercial-scale plants itself and showed private industry the way. Murray called for a billion-dollar five-year program. He particularly stressed the need for this country to develop atomic power as an instrument of foreign policy. He urged that the United States bring this power source and the assurance of better living conditions to its friends abroad, in the developed and the underdeveloped countries. And he warned that if this country didn't, Russia and Britain surely would.

The Murray proposal was later wrapped up in a bill sponsored in the Senate by Gore of Tennessee and in the House by Holifield of California. To remove it from the private versus public power issue, the bill's sponsors specified that the AEC should spend $400 million to build and operate the first commercial-scale atomic power plants on its own installations, to satisfy its own governmental power needs. This was to differentiate it from TVA, which, as a public-sponsored power network, supplies both public and private users and in this way outcompetes the private utilities.

Strauss would have none of it — neither the Murray proposal nor the Gore-Holifield bill. He argued there was no need for a government "subsidy" program; that private industry was perfectly capable of developing atomic power — with the AEC standing by as a research partner; that this approach would produce the most economical and efficient atomic power in the long run; and that the government had no business at all becoming an atomic power producer. Strauss told the Joint Committee he particularly didn't like the way the Gore-Holifield measure "directed" the AEC to proceed. This, said the Chairman, was the kind of wording "you use to your valet."

The Gore-Holifield bill was passed by the Senate, but with Strauss' vigorous opposition it met defeat in the House. Now, with Britain, Russia, and soon France going ahead in the atomic power business and American industry still discussing blueprints, Strauss recently indicated he may consider having government do some of the first power plant construction — if private industry really decides it can't.

Before Congress adjourned last summer, Strauss and Murray had a final conflict. So far the United States has only one commercial-scale atomic power plant under way. This plant, started at Murray's instigation and largely financed by the AEC, goes into operation at Shippingport, Pennsylvania, later this year under the aegis of the Duquesne Light Company. Strauss, to counter the Gore-Holifield bill, had to do better than merely point to a single commercial-scale atomic power plant, largely government-financed. The nearest one off the drawing boards was that of the Power Reactor Development Company, which was to be financed by a group of private utilities and manufacturing concerns under the leadership of Walker L. Cisler and the Detroit Edison Company. The design is the most advanced known, a "fast-neutron, breeder-type" reactor which promises to produce more fissionable material than it consumes in making power.

Strauss, in testifying before the House Appropriations Committee in early August, expressed such confidence in the Cisler reactor that he said he would be leaving for the shores of Lake Erie within the next few days to turn the first shovelful of earth on the site. Murray, out of town during the Strauss testimony, rushed back the next day to tell the Appropriations Committee the AEC's own high-level Reactor Safeguards Committee had given the Cisler proposal an adverse safety report. Chairman Cannon of Missouri, furious at Strauss for not having come clean, wrote in his report that the AEC Chairman either was "deceiving the Committee as to the actual progress of the Detroit Edison project, or he intended to force the AEC licensing of this project in disregard of public safety."

At about the same time, Strauss was asked by the Joint Committee why he hadn't informed them that Detroit Edison's Cisler was acting as the International Cooperation Administration's power consultant abroad while he was in the power business in the United States. Snapped Strauss at Senator Anderson: "I assume that you would not care to have us run a clipping service."

Subsequently Strauss and a Commission majority, in an extraordinary action, overruled the AEC Reactor Safeguards Committee's adverse report. Murray again dissented. Strauss turned the first shovelful of earth last August. But the consternation is far from over. The United Auto Workers and two other unions currently are challenging the Cisler group's right to have a construction license — both on safety and financial grounds. And should the Commission rule against them, the unions intend to take the matter to Federal Court.

What issues lie ahead for Strauss and his Commission — amicable and not so amicable — can only be unraveled with time. But it seems apparent that once dissenter Murray passes from the atomic scene, the healthy give-and-take in determining AEC policy will pass with him. Something of Strauss and something of Murray are essential to both the success and the failure of the AEC. That is why any forthcoming harmony in the AEC may have dubious value.

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The late Serge Koussevitzky once said that GREGOR PIATIGORSKY *was "the greatest cellist of our day." Born in the Ukraine in 1903, Mr. Piatigorsky was appointed first cellist of the Imperial Opera Orchestra in Moscow at the extraordinary age of fifteen. With the outbreak of the Revolution in 1919 he left Moscow, and for a number of years he was reduced to playing in cafés and theaters in Warsaw and Berlin to keep body and soul together. His tribulations finally came to an end in 1924, when he was "discovered" for a second time by Artur Schnabel and Wilhelm Furtwängler. Since 1929 he has made his home in this country.*

MY LIFE, MY CELLO

by GREGOR PIATIGORSKY

1

IT WAS misty and cold on that November day in 1923, and my coat was no match for the piercing dampness in those Berlin streets. It penetrated my bones. As I turned with surprising briskness toward the Zoo Station and reached the famous clock, I had a feeling of satisfaction, as if I had accomplished something of importance.

"I beg your pardon," I heard a man address me. He was tall, well-shaved, and smiling. "Are you Mr. Piatigorsky, by any chance?"

"Yes."

"Extraordinary. What luck! Boris Kroyt certainly described you well. *Gott sei Dank*, I found you," he beamed. "Paul Bose is my name. I am the flutist of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra," he introduced himself.

"Very glad to meet you," I responded.

"I hope you are glad; not even the police could locate you. You did receive my messages, didn't you?" He stopped smiling. "Well, it does not matter now." He looked at his watch. "The main thing is that I have found you." He smiled again. "It is good you brought your cello to town with you. You may need it."

I waited.

"Do you know Arnold Schönberg's music?"

"*Verklärte Nacht*," I said.

"Do you know *Pierrot Lunaire?*"

"No, but why do you ask?"

"I will go right to the point," he said. "In about three weeks from now, there will be the first performance of *Pierrot Lunaire*. We have already had quite a few rehearsals with our cellist Evel Stegmann and others, but he is not sure if he wants to have twenty more rehearsals without pay, and the others — I mean Schnabel and Stiedry — are not sure if they want him to play at all. Anyway," continued Bose, "Stegmann got sick and we want you to replace him. The great question now is: Do you want to try?"

"But you don't know me," I said.

"Never mind. I know about you. Musicians live on gossip, so to speak, and an outstanding performer can't remain unknown for long, even if he wants to. Besides, a virtuoso's passion for obscurity is as nonexistent as a nightingale's milk. Artur Schnabel has heard of you, too. Can you be at his place tomorrow afternoon?"

I said yes. He wrote down Schnabel's address, expressed his delight, and warned me to be there at two o'clock sharp. He left, waving both hands to his right as though he were playing a flute.

It began to rain. In Moscow it probably is snowing now, I thought absently, making for the shelter of the Zoo Station. Though it was only a short distance away, I was soaked when I reached it. I went into the men's room and took the cover off my cello to see if the rain had damaged it.

"I always thought this place needed music," said someone, and there was laughter.

The cello was dry. I put it back in its cover and headed dully for the waiting room. It was crowded with people waiting for the rain to stop. I joined them with that familiar feeling of loneliness one has when one is hungry, cold, and wet.

It was almost dark outside. Soon the rain stopped and I was in the street again. I imagined the moon rising behind the tall trees of the Tiergarten and thought of *Pierrot Lunaire*. Was it program music — like the Serenata of the Debussy Cello Sonata? There, too, was a Pierrot. He played a mandolin to an angry moon. After all these years, I still didn't know where the moon was, or the Pierrot, or why Debussy wanted him to play the mandolin and not the cello. Was there ever a Pierrot with the cello? Never, I decided. It was a noble instru-

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ment fit for a knight, like Don Quixote — or a king, like Solomon — but not for impersonating the bumblebee, bells, birds, or bulls.

Suddenly I was overcome by a feeling of great weakness. The cello seemed to weigh tons. I had to lean on it as it stood on the wet ground. It was my crutch and I was an invalid. With my cello silent, I am dead, I thought morbidly. If only I could listen to music! The thought of it brought life into me again. There must be a concert tonight — maybe they would let me in. They must, they must, I repeated to myself, heading toward the Philharmonic.

2

It was easy to sneak in through the backstage door, for my cello was as good as a ticket. I saw a group of latecomers rushing into the hall but I could not join them with the cello in my hands. Looking for a safe place for it, I walked upstairs into the musicians' quarters, where I thought I could deposit it among other instruments. Near the entrance to the orchestra dressing room stood a man in his underwear, holding a trombone in one hand and his pants in the other. He did not see me standing behind a double bass case, and I seized the opportunity to place my cello in the nearest corner and disappear quietly.

I did not succeed in entering the hall before the first piece had ended, but I did find a seat just a second before Busoni began the Eighth Symphony of Beethoven.

When the concert was over, it was not easy to break through the crowd, and when I reached the dressing room almost all the orchestra had already left. I took my cello without being questioned.

Just as I was about to step out of the building, the icy wind stopped me and I turned back. My shirt and socks were still damp from the rain and I felt miserably cold. Passing the drafty corridor, I walked toward the lobby. In a few minutes I heard the steps of the last people leaving; a little later the doors were locked and there was complete darkness.

The silence and emptiness of the huge building were ghastly. For a long time I stood still, my heart pounding. I felt trapped and wanted to cry for help. I knew no one could hear me, and yet I dared not take a breath as I groped on tiptoes deeper into the dark.

I saw a door leading to a loge, which I later came to know as the "Landecker Loge." I went in. It was large and deep; against the wall stood a couch. I felt its softness with my hand, and was delighted that it was wide and twice my length. My previous anxiety disappeared and soon I was undressed and settled for the night.

How warm and comfortable it is here, I marveled, and what a difference from the bench in the Tiergarten. I was ready to fall asleep, but perhaps I enjoyed my new comfort too much to let the slumber take it away from me. Or was it my overtiredness that kept me awake?

Several hours must have passed before I suddenly had a great urge to play. I jumped up, grabbed my cello, and, naked as I was, moved toward the stage.

I could not find the door or the stairs leading to it, so I climbed onto it from the hall. Panting and impatient, I took the cover off my cello, found a chair, and began to play. The sound of the cello seemed to come back to me from every corner of the hall and from the ceiling of immeasurable height. I improvised at first, then continued with the Suites by Bach and everything I knew for unaccompanied cello. Quite exhausted, but elated, I returned to the Loge.

In the morning I was awakened by the orchestra playing a Schumann Symphony. I thought it was rather nice to rest on the couch there, unseen, and enjoy fine music in the morning. During the intermission, it was quite easy to get dressed unnoticed behind the drapery and to slip out of the Loge.

In the men's room, I found soap and a clean towel, and in the pocket of my cello case a toothbrush, toothpaste, and razor. With Petronian solemnity and blessing my good fortune, I completed the morning with a thorough attendance to my external self. The orchestra was still rehearsing when I walked out of the building.

"Bravo!" Herr Bose greeted me in front of Artur Schnabel's house. "I like that — always 'puncto,' on time!"

Schnabel greeted me likewise with great friendliness. "The others will be here soon," he said, with the score in his hand. "You remember this sixteenth note we spoke about?" he approached Bose.

Bose took a look at the score. "You mean this little one?"

"Yes," said Schnabel. "After a long debate with Stiedry, we came to the conclusion that this sixteenth note is utterly impersonal, so to speak, an objective thought thrown rather carelessly into a heap of strongly emotionalized nerve centers in which the seeming asymmetry represents its basic order."

I listened to Schnabel's deep voice with fascination. Glancing at Bose, I thought he understood as little as I did of what Schnabel said. Though Bose's dumfounded expression must have been apparent, Schnabel went on to unfold his further thoughts. He mentioned something about "monkey bridges" and the relationship between "Schopenhauer and Wagner," but was interrupted by the entrance of Stiedry and Kroyt.

I was glad to see Boris Kroyt, whom I had first met at the Café Rucho. I realized he was really responsible for my being here now. He was a very friendly and engaging young man, and he impressed me as a remarkable violinist, as well as violist.

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After we had all taken our places, I discovered that the cello part was missing, but we found an extra score and the rehearsal began.

I was soon completely absorbed in the music. Its originality delighted me, and despite the hunger which gnawed at me mercilessly, I managed to play well. Everyone seemed pleased, most of all Schnabel himself.

"Shall we rest for a while? Tea is served in the other room."

No one except me seemed in a hurry to have the tea. I waited, listening with the others to Schnabel discoursing on *Pierrot Lunaire*, Communism, and other interesting topics. However, sensing a rather prolonged dissertation, I slowly moved into the other room. There I saw sandwiches and a variety of cakes displayed on a table. I was alone.

It was like leaving a lamb with a wolf, I thought, devouring the sandwiches one by one. I worked fast. Soon there were no sandwiches left, and I began the devastation of the sweeter but less satisfying material. These, also, disappeared with fabulous speed, and only when nothing edible whatever remained on the table did I rejoin the group, who still listened attentively, standing around Schnabel. My absence had not been noticed.

"Well, gentlemen, tea is waiting for us." All followed Schnabel.

The moment he entered the room and saw empty plates, he called the maid. "Where are the sandwiches?" he demanded indignantly. I saw her eyes widen almost with fear.

We had twenty more rehearsals without pay, and I had twenty afternoon teas as my only daily meals. I enjoyed enormously both rehearsals and the sandwiches. But above all, I valued Schnabel's tactfulness and understanding, which right from the beginning made our relationship grow into lasting friendship.

3

The forthcoming first performance of Schönberg's work awoke considerable interest in the music circles of Berlin, and an atmosphere of expectation awaited us on the night of the concert. We knew *Pierrot Lunaire* as well as any standard repertoire. Yet, because we were not certain how the composition would be received, we were anxious about the première.

We were greeted by a large audience, and after taking our places we waited for quiet to settle over the auditorium. Instead of silence, however, we heard a sudden loud shriek, followed by a series of boos, and then a group of people on one side of the hall started a great commotion, punctuated by violent speeches and outcries.

Schnabel was equal to the occasion. With great gusto he launched into a circus polka, and Kroyt and I followed him. "Come on," he encouraged, "this is a fish market." The audience's laughter overcame the confusion, and the atmosphere of vaudeville stopped as abruptly as it had begun. Soon there was complete silence and we were ready to start. Our singer-speaker, Marie Gutheil-Schoder, apparently did not recover from the incident immediately, for at the beginning she appeared almost mute. But before long we caught the true spirit of the music, and despite the fact that over-rehearsed performances can sometimes have a pedestrian quality, ours proved fresh and inspired.

A few weeks after this concert, I received a message from Bose asking me to bring my cello to the Philharmonie. When I arrived, he explained excitedly that although the orchestra season had begun and there was no vacancy, he had spoken so much of me to his colleagues and to Furtwängler that anything might happen. "They all want to know you," he said, "and they are waiting to hear you now on the stage."

Facing Furtwängler and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, I only vaguely realized the importance of the moment. Instead of giving thought to what I should play, I stared at the Landecker Loge in which I had spent the night, and from which I had listened to the same orchestra and the same conductor the next morning. My dreamy absent-mindedness must have been noticed, for I heard Furtwängler's voice: "What's the matter with him?" This brought me back and I began the Schumann Concerto, followed by a movement of Dvorák, a suite by Bach, and many solos and passages from various orchestral works. The orchestra's response was overwhelming. I was engaged as first cellist, embraced by colleagues, and almost moved to tears when Furtwängler put his arms around me and we walked off the stage together.

The procedure of signing my contract was short and happy. I did not want to spoil such an occasion by reading it or asking that its content be explained or translated. Feeling jubilant over my new membership in this great organization, I was impatient to begin work. No longer beset with financial worries, properly dressed and established comfortably — all paid from the salary that was advanced me — I could devote myself completely to my new job.

Otto Müller, one of the oldest members of the orchestra, the harpist and orchestra personnel manager, gave me my first week's schedule. "You asked for it," I said to myself, reading it. There were two rehearsals and a concert daily, some of them at the Philharmonie, some at the Singing Academy and at other places I had never heard of.

The organization of the orchestra was basically a coöperative one, consisting of active members with life tenure, while some younger members and soloists, like myself, were engaged on a one-year basis. The active members had all the decisions to make, and often held meetings which we "guests" were never invited to attend. There were ten Sunday and ten Monday subscription Philharmonic

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concerts. These were the foundation of the great reputation the orchestra had built up since the days of Von Bülow and Nikisch. Now the old tradition was being carried on by Furtwängler. Though he was the head of the orchestra, the coöperative ruled. I had no opportunity to know their financial situation, and though I valued my colleagues' friendship, there was between us a wall separating a stranger from something that resembled a secret society.

I was disturbed by the quality of many of the performances. For 2000 marks anyone could hire the orchestra for a concert with two rehearsals, with no questions asked. Conductors, soloists, composers, and choruses booked the orchestra solidly for the entire season. The orchestra did what they were asked to do, always obeying the conductor regardless of what he might demand.

This was an important law of behavior at the rehearsals, but did not necessarily apply to the performances themselves, for some of the conductors' demands were of such musical absurdity that the word would be passed to play at the concert "as usual." At such concerts the conductor's presence was completely ignored, and as a matter of honor the orchestra actually gave good performances. Real trouble came on those occasions when there was doubt as to the conductor's abilities and the words "as usual" did not pass. We had conductors who could not deny themselves the pleasure of conducting several concerts in a season. Financially, they could afford it. Two of them became orchestra favorites. Rehearsals with them were great entertainment. Both, though on the "as usual" list, attributed their successes not to their artistry alone, but to skill and psychological understanding at rehearsals.

"Gentlemen," one of them would greet us in the morning, "before we begin with the Beethoven Fifth, let us contemplate and muse on Beethoven's innermost impulses, of which he became — luckily for us — a captive, a giant chained to the still more giantesque and more powerful cloud which we are accustomed to know as his inspiration." At this point, many musicians would unfold their morning newspapers. Some would settle themselves with sandwiches, while the rest would converse or just take cat naps. After a long discourse, the conductor would finally reach Beethoven's maturity, his illness, and his death. Then Herr Müller would announce time for intermission.

During the second part of the rehearsals, we would run through a few bars from each composition on the program. In between, the conductor would pay us compliments or tell a few jokes.

The parade of people renting the orchestra included almost as many instrumentalists who couldn't play, and singers who couldn't sing, as conductors who couldn't conduct. I tried hard to match the attitude of dull insensitivity in which, strangely, so many orchestra members seemed to seek their spiritual survival. It was not easy. The rehearsals seemed to last an eternity, and embarrassment at certain performances did not lessen.

I had to find a remedy, and when I did, it was so incredibly simple that I couldn't understand why all the others hadn't done the same. Like a conductor, I began to study scores, and during rehearsals and concerts I imagined myself assuming the entire responsibility for the performances. I got to know the parts of other instruments as well as my own, and in the choral works I would sing silently, and sometimes audibly, with the chorus.

At one memorable performance of St. Matthew's Passion, I was so engrossed in the singing that at the most dramatic moment, all alone, I pierced the air with a most unattractive voice, one bar too early: "Barabbas." The poor conductor fainted. The performance was spoiled. But I was not even fired — just never permitted to play under that particular conductor again.

While the great interest I took in my work was not entirely without injury to the others, I was the only person in the orchestra who wasn't bored at rehearsals, and the only one who kept conductors and soloists company in perspiring profusely at the concerts. I pulsated with enthusiasm and once, after a wonderful performance of a Brahms Symphony, I responded to the applause of the audience as though it were meant for me personally — I stood up and took a bow.

4

My greatest joys were the Furtwängler concerts. He, true leader that he was, made his orchestra give more than it had. Under his influence, the highest achievements were only ambitions. I was young, and perhaps I idealized him somewhat, but his musical guidance and his influence in my development, though great, did not blind me completely. Already in my first months with Furtwängler, I noticed with surprise that he had but a scanty knowledge of string instruments. But how enchanted I was when he admitted it frankly and asked me to instruct him!

"The greater part of the orchestra consists of strings," he said. "A conductor really must play a string instrument. It's my weakness that I don't. Don't you think it's also the weakness of Bruno Walter and Klemperer? Oh God, how glad I would be even to play a double bass! Koussevitzky, without his double bass, would never draw such a sound from his string section. Don't you think that Toscanini would never be the Toscanini he is if he hadn't been a cellist at the start?"

I said, "I don't know. I never heard him. I only know what Chaliapin told me of him."

"What was it?" Furtwängler was eager to know.

"Not much," I said. "Chaliapin, I guess after

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too much vodka, said that Toscanini was the goddamndest lump of macaroni to swallow and that he was the only conductor who scared him and made him feel like a little pupil."

After a pause, Furtwängler said, "Fundamentally, Toscanini is an opera conductor, as Chaliapin is an opera singer. We here are engaged in a different profession."

Knowing of Furtwängler's jealousy, I was not impressed, and I continued to bring to his attention the many intricacies and basic characteristics of the string-playing art. What a magnificent student he was! Fingerings, bowings, portamenti, vibratos — he grasped them all with the astounding rapidity of one who knew that the means justified the end. I wonder who got the most profit out of those hours, and who really was the master of us two. His penetrating questions gave me enough cause to re-examine my own convictions for years to come.

Furtwängler's peculiar technique of conducting has been a constant source of discussion, not only by professionals but among laymen as well. It is difficult to explain his ability to make his orchestra achieve the perfection of an ensemble without the slightest help of precise indications on his part. He could not explain it himself. Perhaps it was exactly the lack of concreteness in his directions that made the orchestra "feel" his intentions more keenly.

His downbeat in *forte* would be announced by a vigorous stamping of his feet and shaking of his head, and instantly followed by a series of short spits (never reaching beyond the first cello) which would finally force down his trembling baton. Just a fraction of a second after the baton had reached its destination, the orchestra would enter, but always in perfect unison and precision. His downbeat in a *piano* had almost the same characteristics, except that there was no stamping and hardly any spitting at all.

Under him there were many glorious performances, a few of which are unforgettable. Yet not every Furtwängler concert was all glory. I remember particularly one first performance of a contemporary work. Extremely difficult, the piece needed more time for rehearsal than was available. Furtwängler, after running through the piece, began to work note by note for the rest of the rehearsal.

"Is it F-sharp?" inquired a musician.

Furtwängler consulted the score and said, "Yes. Why?"

"Doesn't sound right."

Every second someone would interrupt Furtwängler with a question. "There are seven eights in my bar. Is it correct?" "Is it a sixteenth note?" "How do you play pizzicato and arco at the same time?" Et cetera, et cetera. Furtwängler, visibly nervous while trying to clarify things, sank only deeper into confusion.

He spent that afternoon and evening studying the score. I was permitted to glance at it, also. Next morning we rehearsed again, but the composition appeared only the more complex.

"Let's at least play together," Furtwängler would cry as he repeated the piece again and again. "You realize that there will be only one more rehearsal this afternoon, and that the composer will be present?"

After a short lunch, we reassembled at the Philharmonie.

"Gentlemen," announced Furtwängler, "I have just received the most wonderful news from Vienna — the composer is not coming. He sends his best wishes."

"Bravo! Bravo!" cried a host of jubilant voices.

"That's not all," Furtwängler continued. "We will of course try to do our best, but at the same time, I want you to know that there is only one score of the composition in the country. The composer has the other one."

We went through the rest of the program, which consisted of a standard repertoire, and without so much as touching the new composition, we completed the rehearsal in a fairly jovial mood.

The next day the musicians began arriving for the concert much earlier than usual, and an hour or two before the time to be called on stage, everyone was busy practicing his part. We played the pieces preceding the première in a sort of absent-minded manner, tense and yet as if we were not really present. Then came the première and up loomed Furtwängler's worried face as we made ready to plunge into deep, unknown waters.

From the very start, I had the extraordinary sensation of having been taken by surprise. The weird sounds of the orchestra welled up as though from the stomachs of hundreds of ventriloquists! The double basses sounded like violas, and the bassoons like flutes. Seconds became hours as the performance rolled crazily on. Each player strove desperately to keep in touch with the others, not turning any more to Furtwängler for help. He himself appeared hopelessly lost.

The termination of the performance began very gradually, the players dropping out one by one until only Furtwängler and a few isolated instruments were left. At that point, for no explainable reason, the brass section entered. The magnitude of the sound was truly fabulous; and coming so unexpectedly, it took us all completely off guard. We grabbed our instruments and vigorously joined the brasses with renewed hope. The incredible noise did not last very long, and soon — after a few last convulsions — everything stopped dead.

The silence that followed this abrupt ending was terrible to bear, and the hissing, hand clapping, and catcalls came almost as a relief. Among those applauding in the audience I noticed a few well-known musicians. I heard them say later, "The public is ignorant." So are we, I thought.

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For four years TOM LEA, *the artist and author of El Paso, has been absorbed in writing and illustrating his incomparable two-volume history of the King Ranch, to be published by Little, Brown. His hero is Richard King, son of an Irish immigrant, who made his reputation as a steamboater on the Rio Grande and who came ashore in his late twenties to become a cattle baron of Texas. He was early befriended by Lt. Col. Robert E. Lee, and when the Civil War broke out, the King Ranch, "the back door of the Confederacy," shipped beef to the armies and cotton across the border. But after the war the Mexicans moved in to help themselves.*

CATTLE RAIDS ON THE KING RANCH

by TOM LEA

1

CATTLE thieves started to plague the ranges of Southwest Texas immediately after the end of the Civil War. The stealing began as a consequence of the severe winter of 1863–1864, when huge numbers of strayed cattle from north of the Nueces drifted before the punishing winds into the south tip of Texas. Owners could do little toward recovery of this stock; most of it was left unclaimed, untended, bearing its increase. Uncounted thousands of cattle so far from home ranges and so close to an international boundary were an open invitation to theft; a traffic in stolen livestock sprang up. Any foot-loose horseman could drive cattle wearing any Texas brand across the river into Mexico and get two to four dollars cash for a cow that cost nothing but the effort to deliver it. Scattered thievery soon became wholesale depredation. A spawn of border ruffians, operating mostly from lairs south of the Rio Grande, began to raid and terrorize the ranches of the border country as far north as the Nueces.

The risk was very small. Texas suffered a sorry lack of means to enforce law and to put down the disorder that followed in the wake of a ruinous war. The Texas Rangers were disbanded, abolished by order of the Reconstruction regime. Local law administrators were powerless to provide peace officers who would even attempt to cope with the brigands adrift along both banks of the convenient river. The only real presence or semblance of force against unbridled border lawlessness were garrisons of United States troops. And, as Rip Ford, ex-Texas Ranger and ex-Confederate colonel, wrote later, "It might have been the powers of government remembered the course of Texas during the Civil War, and left her to take care of herself in the emergency brought about by Mexican raiders."

To this sorry lack of means for the enforcement of law in Texas there was joined a cynical lack of interest on the part of Mexican authorities in stopping thieves from bringing stolen Texas cattle to Mexico. The old hatreds and mistrusts between the two races were still alive and needed only a little fanning to burst again into flame.

Plunder of the ranches along the Texas side of the river soon assumed the guise of race war. The operations of the brown-faced marauders were so surprisingly successful they were soon bragging, "The gringos are raising cows for me." They justified themselves, if they had any qualms, by saying that the cattle and everything else between the Nueces and the Rio Grande originally belonged to Mexicans, that they had every right to take back their own. They called the cattle they stole "Nanita's" cattle, meaning "grandma's." Grandma's cattle brought quick cash money.

The raiding of Texas ranches and the theft of almost incredible numbers of Texas livestock were continuous from 1865 until 1878. In the years when raiding was at its height, Texas stockmen estimated that as many as 200,000 head of their cattle were stolen annually. By 1875, there remained in the region between the Rio Grande and the Nueces only one fourth to one third the number of cattle there had been in 1866.

The raiding was often accompanied by brutal murder. Isolated ranchmen had no recourse, no protection, but that which they could furnish themselves. "Old and young were subjected to every form of outrage and torture, dragged at the hooves of horses, burned and flayed alive, shot to death or cut to pieces with knives, their homes and ranches looted and destroyed." Defenseless travelers were ambushed; the roads over the lonely prairies became too dangerous to travel without armed escorts.

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Not all the thieves drove away the stock they stole. Gangs of hide-peelers killed cattle on the range, skinned them, and hauled the hides to market — a thievery practiced with greater dispatch, if less profit, than delivering herds of cattle on the hoof. Hide-peelers displayed unspeakable cruelty in their operations. Many of them used the *media luna*, a scythe-like knife in the shape of a half-moon mounted on a long shaft, handled from horseback to hamstring cattle. The knocked-down animals were sometimes skinned while still alive. Ranchers pursuing hide-peelers would come upon suckling calves bawling by their mothers' raw carcasses still warm and jerking with signs of life.

In the midst of this trouble, rancher Richard King was no novice at defending himself. He fought the gangs of spoilers by every means he could muster, from firearms to political pressures, but the thieving was so stealthy and endless, the raiding so malign, it threatened the survival of his ranch.

From a post-war roundup of stock on the Santa Gertrudis in 1866, R. King & Co. had estimated it owned 84,000 head of cattle. Yet at the division of the property in 1869, King and Kenedy managed to gather just 48,664 cattle which, added to an estimated 10,000 head ungathered, made a total of 58,664. This startling decrease, after three years in which few cattle were sold and in which an undisturbed breed herd would ordinarily double in size, was some indication of the plunder in progress even before the raiding reached its full fury. During the next three years, from 1869 to 1872, Richard King claimed loss by theft of 33,827 head of cattle.

Losses like these came in spite of constant vigilance. Since its first establishment in 1854, the ranch on the Santa Gertrudis had been forced to maintain its own defense. A band of *Kineños* commanded by their foreman, Captain James Richardson, had stood guard against thieves for years. There was nothing new in keeping the brass cannon at headquarters loaded or in manning the lookout atop the commissary, high on the rise in the prairie. As the livestock thefts increased regardless of his vaquero patrols, King bought "some thirty stands of Henry rifles and a supply of ammunition." He hired extra riders, probably as many as a dozen, who were handy with the Henrys. And while foreman Richardson and his riders patrolled, King built fence. A visitor to the ranch in 1872 said that Captain King calculated "it would cost $50,000 to fence his ranch, and that he would be repaid in one year by the prevention of these thefts and proceeded to fence his ranch, . . . and has now built 31 or 32 miles and has 8 or 9 miles now under way. This is directly a preventative against theft. Guard stations to be placed on each of the four sides of this enclosure."

Direct action, in trying to keep thieves off his ranch and in fighting them with guns when they came anyway, was not enough. King paid agents along the Rio Grande and even in Mexico to spot stolen cattle bearing his brand. He hired men to ride after this stock to try to bring it back. He found that once the cattle had crossed the river, attempts at recovery were futile.

Facing conditions like these, ranchmen on the north bank of the river banded together in 1870 as the Stock Raisers Association of Western Texas, to help each other gun for thieves, to find and return each other's stolen stock, to prosecute in court every criminal that could be caught, and to bring pressure on the state and national governments for protection. Mifflin Kenedy presided over the first meeting; he and King not only supported but led the activities of the organization. Among these was the advertisement of the stockmen's registered brands in the local newspapers, so that the legal owners of cattle wearing such brands might be unmistakable. The list of brands used by Richard King, followed by a long array of brands he held by purchase, appeared regularly.

In 1869, official hide and cattle inspectors appointed by the Army post commanders on the Rio Grande were authorized to examine all cattle and hides in the commerce crossing the river. The inspectors gathered facts and figures, but were armed with no power whatever to check the traffic they daily observed. A too earnest pursuit of their duties proved unhealthy for reasons clearly discernible in a typical Matamoros hide yard dealer's instructions to his help: "Shoot the first damned gringo son of a bitch who comes here and attempts to look at a hide."

When the thievery increased rather than diminished, and especially when it became clear that there was some connection between the official Mexican Commander of the Line of the Bravo and the depredation north of the Bravo, United States Army details were at times ordered into the field to pursue reported raiders. As usual, regulation soldiers on limited scouts were incapable of countering the nonregulation elusiveness of brush-riding bandits. What the border needed, and missed sorely, was a troop of Texas Rangers.

2

Both the Mexican government and the U.S. government set up investigating commissions in 1872. In 1875, a Permanent Committee of Brownsville citizens prepared and printed an exhaustive account of the depredations suffered at the hands of Mexican thieves and bandits; a Congressional Committee of the 44th Congress in 1876 drew up an even longer list of specific murders, burnings, losses, thefts to which the south tip of Texas had been subjected. Yet all this documentation produced little more than prime source material for the writing of history in a later day. At the time, the reports brought no comfort and very little direct aid to the

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ravaged citizens above the Line of the Bravo.

In January of 1874, Governor Richard Coke, elected by the people of Texas and not by the ballot-stuffing of Carpetbaggers, had taken the reins of office from E. J. Davis. A Democratic legislature had already abolished the Texas State Police; late in 1874, the Texas Rangers had been re-established, to the relief of every decent citizen in every frontier county of the state. In the spring of 1875, an extraordinary officer named L. H. McNelly, former Rebel, one of the few men with a fine record in the Texas State Police, was commissioned as a captain of Texas Rangers to enlist a company for special duty on the lower Rio Grande.

On April 18, 1875, authorities at Austin received a telegram from Sheriff John McClane of Nueces County:

> IS CAPT MCNELLY COMING. WE ARE IN TROUBLE. FIVE RANCHES BURNED BY DISGUISED MEN NEAR LA PARRA LAST WEEK. ANSWER.

Captain McNelly came, made short work of the villainous excesses of "disguised men," then late in May led his rangers south to Brownsville.

His arrival there coincided with a burst of activity on the part of cattle thieves in the area. Their chieftain, General Juan Cortina, happened to be gathering livestock in Texas to fill a contract for the delivery of 3500 beeves to Spanish army garrisons in Cuba. A ship was waiting at Bagdad; Cortina was watching it load.

McNelly hit like a bolt of lightning from a clear sky. Early in the morning of June 12, on the Palo Alto prairie fourteen miles north of Brownsville, the ranger captain with twenty-two of his men struck a band of about a dozen bandits driving three hundred stolen cattle toward the river. In the blazing fight one ranger was killed; not one of the thieves got away alive. Next day the bandits' dead bodies were hauled in and dumped on the market square in Brownsville. As a public notice, it was a statement bandits could understand, published in their own language. The bodies were quickly identified as some of Cortina's more notorious bravos; the display aroused a great wrath across the river. And after ten long years of banditry unpunished, the dead bodies left for relatives to claim on the market square of Brownsville that day in June aroused an entirely unaccustomed caution on the part of men who made their living stealing cattle.

The 31-year-old Leander H. McNelly was a leader exactly formed for the work he found on the border. With less than fifty men, in less than a year, he broke the back of a long war with hundreds of organized brigands. He burned himself out at it, dying young from the tuberculosis his life of exposure and hardship brought him. But while he lasted — there were never any like him.

He had a soft voice, an even temper, and a cold-steel disdain for personal danger. Beneath this unassailable cool steadiness burned a flame that made him a brilliant leader, a fire that warmed the hearts of the men he led, that kindled them with respect for him in camp, with emulation for him in a fight. The men he enlisted to follow him were all young and they did not stay unless they were daring. There were only a handful of Texans; their captain preferred to recruit from backgrounds remote from any locale of ranger duty. The basic requirements for service were unflinching bravery and disregard of hardship; skill with firearms and horses came next. McNelly was a demanding master who made his demands by example. The western frontier seems not to have had at any time a more fearless band of disciplined fighters than McNelly's border company of Texas Rangers.

The only way McNelly could catch bandits — he never had more than forty rangers to patrol the whole area — was to be in the right place at the right time. To be there, it was necessary to have advance information, and the only way to get that information was from spies or captives. McNelly used both.

The bandits had their informers among the rancheros in Texas. Fighting fire with fire, McNelly set about acquiring spies among the bandits in Mexico. He said, "I made inquiry about the character of the men who composed the various bands on the opposite bank and I found they were organized into bands of fifteen or twenty or thirty. . . . I made inquiries into the personal character and reputation of the individuals of the bands and I selected those whom I knew to be tricky." To these tricky ones McNelly offered more money than they could make by raiding, a regular salary of sixty dollars a month plus additional rewards depending on the number of thieves identified with any foray for which the spy furnished advance information. McNelly said he found the informers "reliable and trustworthy. I did not propose to interfere with their own individual stealing. I gave them liberty, when I was not in their neighborhood, to cross over with their friends, and get cattle and return again." The money required to pay these spies was clearly outside any ranger service budget; some of the members of the Stock Raisers Association were furnishing McNelly with a war chest. At the time, Richard King was supplying the rangers with beef. He doubtless supplied more, including his own network of informers and contacts with border characters whom McNelly could trust.

McNelly also got information from the thieves he captured. Fighting ruthless enemies, McNelly used ruthless methods. Among the recruits he took into his company was a strange figure named Jesús Sandobal, who from his knowledge of the language and of the country was given charge of forcing information from prisoners. Sandobal often hanged them afterwards. His cruelty stemmed from venge-

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ance: the ranch he owned in Texas had been destroyed and his wife and daughter violated by raiders. McNelly used "Casuse" Sandobal as a harsh instrument in a harsh operation. The border war with cow bandits was at no time, on either side, a tournament of chivalry.

3

For five months following the fight on the Palo Alto prairie the rangers had no major encounter with any big band of raiders. During that time McNelly's men caught scattered thieves and recovered herds of stolen livestock north of the river, while McNelly entertained the growing conviction that the only way to end the border's trouble was to hit the heart of the matter: to strike with full force *south* of the river.

Through his spies McNelly learned that the principal lair of the organized brigands was a fortified ranch called Las Cuevas belonging to a General Juan Flores, located in the brush three miles south of the river, twelve miles below Rio Grande City and Ringgold Barracks. The proximity of Las Cuevas to a post of newly arrived troopers belonging to the Eighth Cavalry at Ringgold suggested an augury for the operation McNelly began to plan. He lost no opportunity to meet Army officers and to work at an Army promise for coöperation with a ranger thrust across the Rio Grande — where it would do the most good. Though the Army was hampered by its usual instructions not to violate neutrality by pursuing bandits into Mexico, field officers stationed on the border lent the ranger captain a sympathetic ear.

Early in November, McNelly learned that Las Cuevas was to be the gathering point of eighteen thousand head of Texas cattle which Mexican traffickers in stolen livestock had contracted to deliver to purchasers in Monterrey within ninety days. He made this information known to the Army; on November 12, McNelly had seen the commander at Ringgold, Major A. J. Alexander, and had gotten a promise from him that he would "instruct his men to follow raiders wherever I will go." Alexander's promise was backed by a similar commitment from his superior in command at Brownsville, Colonel Potter. Sharpened with this prospect and alerted for the expected raiders bringing stolen herds south toward Las Cuevas, McNelly took the field planning to pursue the raiders into Mexico, when necessary, and to wipe them out with United States Army help.

Events did not conform to McNelly's plans.

While he and his men were in the brush near Edinburg fifty-five miles downriver late in the afternoon of November 17, a scouting company of the Eighth Cavalry found a gang of bandits chasing a herd of cattle into Mexico at the Las Cuevas crossing. In the firing, two thieves were killed and another wounded, but the troopers did not cross the river in pursuit. Instead, they made camp on the Texas riverbank, to await further orders.

No dispatch rider was needed. That evening the old wilderness warfare on the remote Rio Grande partook of a new time: a telegraph line now ran along the river close by the cavalry camp. A field telegrapher was soon in communication with Ringgold Barracks and Fort Brown. And the wires went on to Washington.

During the night, Colonel Potter at Brownsville ordered Major Alexander at Ringgold to reinforce and to assume command of the encamped troops at the Las Cuevas crossing; at dawn another cavalry unit came from downriver and joined the force.

There were at least a hundred troopers perched on the riverbank doing nothing when Captain McNelly, riding alone, came into the camp at noon on November 18. He quietly announced he intended to go into Mexico after the stolen cattle as soon as his rangers arrived, and he dispatched a messenger for them. They rode the fifty-five miles to the Las Cuevas crossing in five hours.

The telegraph wires had already tangled the troops with Army red tape and with second thoughts on the part of the command. When McNelly asked the senior officer present on the riverbank, Major Clendenin, for troops to go with the rangers into Mexico, the request was refused, though Clendenin said, "If you are determined to cross, we will cover your return." Knowing the odds his rangers faced on the other side of the river, McNelly replied that not one of them could get back alive without the aid of the troops.

McNelly shoved off that night. Five men swam their horses to the other bank; the others, including McNelly, crossed three at a time in a leaky Mexican scow. At four o'clock in the morning on November 19, the ranger company stood gathered in the dark on the Mexican side of the Rio Grande: thirty men, five mounted, each man carrying only pistol and rifle, with forty rounds of ammunition for each weapon, and a little broiled goat meat prepared before the crossing. With this force McNelly expected to attack a fortified ranch he knew was defended by at least ten times his own number. He expected no quarter from them and he expected to give none. He took the risk believing that his action would bring the United States Army into Mexico and into decisive war against the brigands.

Standing in the dark before daybreak he said, "Boys, the pilot tells me that Las Cuevas Ranch is picketed in with high posts set in the ground with bars for a gate. We will march single file as the cow-trail is not wide enough for you to go in twos. The mounted men will go first, and when we get to the ranch the bars will be let down and I want the five men on horses to dash through the ranch yelling and shooting to attract attention and the rest of us will close in behind and do the best we can. Kill

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all you see except old men, women and children. These are my orders and I want them obeyed to the letter."

At first dawn they arrived before the heavy picket posts they thought enclosed Las Cuevas. McNelly inspected his little invasion force in the dim light. "Boys," he said, "I like your looks all right — you are the palest set of men I ever looked at. That is a sign you are going to do good fighting. In the Confederate army I noticed that just before battle all men get pale."

Gate bars were let down. The rangers charged in yelling and shooting, killing four men surprised while chopping wood for breakfast fires. In the growing light, the guide suddenly told McNelly that he had made a mistake, that he was in the wrong rancho, that this was a place called the Cachattus, that the Las Cuevas headquarters was a half mile up the trail.

By the time the rangers had made their way on to Las Cuevas itself, more than two hundred mounted Mexican soldiers were dashing into the stronghold, stirred up by the shooting they had heard at the outlying rancho. McNelly formed a line and opened fire but soon decided to withdraw. "Our surprise is gone," he explained. "It would be suicide to charge them with only thirty men. We will go back to the river."

At the river's edge, McNelly had no thought of recrossing to the Texas side. Posting two pickets in the brush, he hid the rest of his men under the cover of the riverbank, hoping the Mexicans would come in pursuit — and still hoping to bring United States cavalrymen into Mexico for a fight.

The bandits were not long in coming. About twenty-five horsemen dashed from the brush expecting to catch their enemies swimming the river. The rangers charged up from the riverbank and opened fire, advancing. After a hot exchange the horsemen wheeled back into the thickets. They left a dead man on the open field. When the rangers moved up firing to where he lay, they found they had killed the bandit chief himself, the *dueño* of Las Cuevas, General Juan Flores. McNelly tucked Flores' gold- and silver-plated pistol into his own belt and ordered the rangers back to the cover of the riverbank.

Meanwhile, Captain Randlett of D Company, Eighth Cavalry, had crossed the river with forty troopers. At the beginning of the action McNelly had shouted across the river — in carefully exaggerated distress — while his men were charging up the riverbank and out of sight, "Randlett, for God's sake come over and help us!" Randlett had decided that the rangers were "in danger of annihilation" and had come over to keep the Army's promise.

When the rangers got back to the river and found Randlett with his troopers ready on the Mexican side, McNelly tried to persuade Randlett to go with him to assault the ranch. The Army captain replied he was not unwilling to stay on the Mexican riverbank until his commander, Major Alexander, arrived on the other side and could give orders, but he refused to consider McNelly's proposal for a move inland.

They did not find it necessary to leave the river to find a fight. The enemy returned in force to avenge the death of Flores. At intervals from eleven that morning until nearly five that afternoon, the Mexicans came charging. Each time the rangers and the troopers beat them back.

At five o'clock, Mexicans suddenly appeared with a white flag of truce. They presented a note which was interpreted at great variance by Randlett and McNelly in separate reports later.

Randlett said the truce proposal promised that the stolen cattle would be returned to Ringgold next day, that every effort would be made to arrest the thieves, that a withdrawal of American troops was requested. McNelly said the note as written demanded that the troops vacate Mexico — and only promised to consider any Texan complaint afterwards. He said that Randlett was ready to agree to such terms but that he, McNelly, refused to leave Mexico until the stolen cattle and the thieves were brought to him. The Mexicans then asked a cessation of hostilities for the night. When this was arranged, McNelly and Randlett moved back to the riverbank. It was dusk; Alexander had arrived at the campfires across the river. He ordered Randlett and his troopers out of Mexico immediately.

As night came on, the handful of Texas Rangers stood alone in Mexico, and stayed alone. An overwhelming force of brigands and soldiers enveloped them. Yet with the bearing of a man who led a fire-eating regiment, not a company of thirty, McNelly in the truce arrangements had agreed to give the enemy "an hour's notice before I commenced active operations." In the dark of the long night he had his men dig a trench by the riverbank.

4

The next morning, November 20, the wires on the poles along the other side of the river made a high hum. The affair at Las Cuevas had reached Washington. Through channels, Colonel Potter at Fort Brown received orders which he relayed to Major Alexander, "Commdg. in the Front":

> ADVISE CAPT MCNELLY TO RETURN AT ONCE TO THIS SIDE OF THE RIVER. INFORM HIM THAT YOU ARE DIRECTED NOT TO SUPPORT HIM IN ANY WAY WHILE HE REMAINS ON THE MEXICAN TERRITORY. IF MCNELLY IS ATTACKED BY MEXICAN FORCES ON MEXICAN SOIL DO NOT RENDER HIM ANY ASSISTANCE. KEEP YOUR FORCES IN THE POSITION YOU NOW HOLD AND AWAIT FURTHER ORDERS. LET ME KNOW WHETHER MCNELLY ACTS UPON YOUR ADVICE AND RETURNS.

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The clatter of the telegraphers reached past the Army, into the State Department. The United States Consul at Matamoros was wiring the United States Commercial Agent of Camargo, standing in readiness at Ringgold:

> I UNDERSTAND MCNELLY IS SURROUNDED AND TREATING FOR TERMS OF SURRENDER. IF SO GO TO HIM IMMEDIATELY AND ADVISE HIM TO SURRENDER TO THE MEXICAN FEDERAL AUTHORITIES AND THEN YOU GO WITH HIM TO THIS CITY TO SEE THAT NOTHING HAPPENS ON THE WAY. INSTRUCTIONS HAVE BEEN SENT FROM HERE TO AUTHORITIES IN CAMARGO TO ALLOW YOU TO ACT IN THE MATTER. ANSWER.

Copies of both these communications, accompanied by every official pressure, were hurried across the river to save the "doomed" rangers.

At four o'clock that afternoon, McNelly notified the Mexicans, according to his truce agreement to give one hour's advance warning, that he was *advancing to attack* unless his demands were met. He demanded the delivery of the stolen cattle and the thieves who stole them, with no legal dodges nor any excuses for delay. The ruffians facing this man with the lethal eyes, this *hombre de verdad*, gave in. They agreed to deliver to Rio Grande City at ten o'clock the next morning all the stolen stock that could be rounded up and all the thieves that could be caught. With that promise, McNelly withdrew — "reserving the right, if I saw proper, to go to Camargo and take the cattle."

The next morning McNelly took ten rangers to Rio Grande City to get the cattle; he was fairly certain he would get no thieves. Instead of cattle, he got a note. The *jefe* in Camargo wrote: "Because of excessive work on hand, I do not send you the cattle today, but early tomorrow morning . . ." McNelly wrote a note in return, which ended: "As the Commanding Officer of the United States forces is here awaiting your action in this matter, I would be glad if you would inform me of the earliest hour at which you can deliver these cattle and any of the thieves you may have apprehended."

The Commanding Officer was not "awaiting" and would have done nothing about it if he had been. But McNelly's acute mention of the United States Army was not lost upon the *jefe* in Camargo, who forthwith changed the schedule of his excessive work on hand. He wrote a note informing McNelly that the cattle would be delivered at three o'clock that afternoon.

Seventy-five stolen cattle close-herded by twenty-five Mexicans armed with Winchesters and pistols came to the river's edge at three. McNelly with his ten men, armed, had come over on the ferry to meet them. McNelly asked the drovers to put the cattle on the Texas side, as agreed. The *caporal* refused, saying it was impossible until the cattle "were inspected." McNelly told his interpreter to tell the *caporal* that the cattle were stolen from Texas without being inspected and they were going back that way. The *caporal* said no. McNelly rapped out an order. The startled drovers were instantly looking down the barrels of the rangers' cocked guns. One of the men holding one of the cocked guns said later that McNelly told the interpreter "to tell the son of a bitch that if he didn't deliver the cattle across the river in less than five minutes he would kill all of them, and he would have done it too, for he had his red feather raised. If you ever saw cattle put across the river in a hurry those Mexicans did it."

In the herd that came back at last, after the long years in which herds moved only one way, there were thirty-five head of cattle wearing the brand of Richard King.

The McNelly rangers brought an abrupt change of demeanor to the outlawry on the border. The stealing of cattle from Texas, formerly such an attractive pursuit, lost its appeal. It began to be dangerous. Though the raiding continued for another five years, it became desultory and increasingly furtive. The wholesale depredation ceased, the outrageous open traffic in stolen livestock came to an end with the affair at Las Cuevas. The raffish practitioners of border banditry and the purveyors of border race hate lacked the guts to hunt a fight with men like L. H. McNelly and his rangers. When the rangers hunted them, they quit.

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When OSCAR HANDLIN, *Professor of History at Harvard, and his wife attended a recent international conference in Yugoslavia, he was constantly surprised by the thinking and motivation which separated the representatives of the U.S.S.R. and its satellites from those of the Western powers. The barriers of poverty, regimentation, and unquestioned ideology often stood in the way of a meeting of minds. A Pulitzer Prize winner in history, Mr. Handlin is the author of several books, the latest being* Race and Nationality in American Life.

WORLDS APART

Classes and Masses in the Communist State

by OSCAR HANDLIN

1

USUALLY we left the conference room in groups. But always the Russian went off alone with his interpreter. There were fifteen of us who had come together to discuss the past and the future of that changing world that borders on the Mediterranean and reaches from Morocco to Iran. They had been strangers to one another and to me when they had arrived from Egypt and Turkey and Israel and Syria. Yet we had quickly discovered a common level of discourse, and through the days of our meeting had much to say to one another. French and English were our languages; we had all been educated in the West; and we had the common intellectual concerns of our culture.

Only the Russian was an outsider. A dignified man of sixty, he had never before ventured out of the Soviet Union. The marks of the provincial showed in his reticence, in his inability to adjust to the men about him, and in his wary expectation of rebuffs that never came. Often he was at a loss as to how to behave; and rarely could he participate in the conversation that carried us through the social interludes of the conference.

Yet, in the conference sessions, I the American was the outsider, and the Russian gained a far more attentive hearing. The United States seemed to all the participants an anomaly; its experience, I was told, was not relevant elsewhere in the world. Nations that wished to expand economically could not afford the looseness of our society; they needed powerful governments, strict planning, rigid control over consumption and investment, and a disciplined social order. From that point of view the Soviet Union was the more appropriate model.

This assumption did not rest on convincing evidence. As carefully marshaled facts and arguments were lost in the atmosphere of polite but determined disbelief, it became clear that there was another basis to the preference for the Russian position. My colleagues could envision themselves and their countries in the situation of the Soviet Union but not in that of the United States.

They were backward and underdeveloped as the Russians had once been, and they were striving for industrial might through revolution as the Russians had. They too were burdened by a corrupt and selfish ruling class and by anachronistic social institutions. Like the Russians, they felt themselves on the margin of Western civilization, sharing its values but not entirely able to identify themselves with the society that had produced those values.

The United States, by contrast, was altogether apart. Its material prosperity, its wealth, and its power distinguished it from the world of universal poverty that other men knew. The same wealth made it suspect. How could it have gained what it had without exploiting others? If its colonialism was less overt than that of France or England, and often functioned under the guise of altruism, perhaps it was all the more dangerous. I pointed to the docks at Rijeka built with American funds. "Ah," I was told, "you see how the Americans are planning to conquer our markets with their goods."

The sentiments that crop up thus as anti-Americanism or anti-colonialism, or nationalism, will not abate through simple discussion of the merits of the case. Are we or the Russians the imperialists, the threateners to peace, the exploiters of subject nations? The answers are predetermined by an intellectual dogmatism that satisfies the needs of men living under tensions difficult to imagine.

My wife and I had come into Zagreb, the conference city, by air. We followed our bags out of the terminal and walked after the porter, who had

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already shouldered the luggage and made off down the street. For a moment, we looked for the taxi to which we expected he would lead us. Then we realized that this journey was to be on foot.

The broad straight streets that led down to the central railroad station and the hotel were lined with imposing structures. Occasional neoclassical or baroque public buildings reminded us of Vienna. The apartment houses were solid, and even palatial; the dutiful plaster goddesses that supported the lintels of the entranceways reflected the aspirations of the comfortable middle class who once lived there. The dates on the cornerstones read: 1908, 1911, 1910, 1913. It was a long time since Zagreb had been the Austrian outpost for expansion toward the east.

Now it was Yugoslav and its best days were over. Gaping holes in the walls showed where the ornamentation had been worn away or had fallen off, and had never been replaced. Sagging hinges kept the great front doors from closing. The broken windows and the absence of paint created an impression of unending dreariness. We crossed street after street, walking directly onward. There was no need to pause, for there was no traffic. In all the way we had come we had seen not a taxi or a truck, not a car or even a cart.

As we approached the hotel, we made a still more startling discovery. The streets had been ours alone. We had heard no sounds but our own footfalls, seen no moving images but our own shadows cast in the bright sun. We came up the stairs and thought, "Where are the people?"

2

That evening we saw some of them. Impatient of the empty hotel, where only a handful of foreigners sat cheerlessly in the grim lobby, we determined to find a restaurant.

As we made our way to the town center, we saw a man hurrying purposefully along, a brief case under his arm. We saw three women balancing baskets on their heads, undisturbed in their peasant stride. Now the streets were more fully populated; and by the time we reached Trg Republike, the central square, we had become part of a shuffling, silent crowd. When we came to the restaurant, we could see hundreds of men and women, standing in little groups, occupied in conversation, but without the animation of Italian or Spanish street crowds.

When we emerged from the restaurant, the square was packed. Night had fallen and thousands of people stood looking quietly upward. Running across two stories of a building on its north side was a great screen on which the motion pictures gave the masses their entertainment.

Was this how men lived?

We asked these questions of the young professor. The introduction of a mutual acquaintance had brought us together, but it took several meetings to dissolve his initial shyness and reserve. He had invited us to dine in the city's best restaurant and was already embarrassed, having lost his way as we walked there. Now he was ill at ease in the sparsely occupied establishment, patronized apparently by army officers, high bureaucrats, and foreigners, and he floundered in the ordering.

Of course, he had never been there before. The unfamiliarity of the place brought him closer to us, and with growing confidence he began to explain. We ought to understand why the streets were empty in the daytime. The new society discouraged idleness. The workday began early and ended late and everyone was engaged in the common effort. The streets were crowded enough, however, before seven in the morning. And the mass in the square was evidence of the public concern for the enlightenment and entertainment of the common people.

We must know that standards had changed in this society; and the change was beneficial, though not always comfortable. He himself, for instance, rarely dined out. Indeed, he wished that he had been able to ask us to visit in his home. But life was difficult and housing was short. There was simply no room; his wife, his children, his wife's parents, and his own mother were crowded intolerably in the tiny flat. His evident sincerity aroused our sympathy, if it did not altogether convince us.

A few days later, curiosity led us to walk by the address he had given. We passed through the empty streets into a broad square, at the center of which was an impressive round stone building. Built as an Orthodox church by the sculptor Meštrović, it had for a time been a mosque and now was a museum to the martyrs of fascism. Why a mosque in a city where there had been no Moslems?

That had been the war. Historically, the population of Zagreb had been divided between Catholic Croats and Orthodox Serbs. During the invasion, the Croats had taken control, with German support. In the months of bitter fighting, there had been many unpleasant incidents. Some Serbs — two thousand or more, the number was not clear — had taken refuge in the church and had been slaughtered there. Then the Croat Quisling had sought the support of the Moslems in the south and had turned the building into a mosque. Naturally, later the Croats were paid back.

We were given a blunt statistic we tried often thereafter to forget. Of the 300,000 residents of the city in 1940, more than 110,000 had been killed — by one another.

How much more eager to forget were the Yugoslavs themselves, of whom one in seven had lost his life in the war! How could an American know the emotions of having lived through a struggle that left not a family untouched, that left not a single institution intact? As desperate as the need for

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material reconstruction was the need for beliefs to live by and for moorings onto which to attach the emotions.

Through much of the east which lies beyond Vienna, men are tormented by the same painful vacuum. Two world wars, a depression, and massive industrialization accompanied the collapse of ancient institutions. As human life depreciated in value, there seemed but one alternative to despair: somehow to satisfy the desire for dignity and meaning in life through identification with the larger all-comprehending entity of the nation. As the individual grew weaker, there was satisfaction in seeing the state grow stronger; as housing deteriorated, there was pride in the great buildings of the capital cities; as personal relationships fell into disorder, there was a disposition to acquiesce in rigid public regimentation.

Again and again nationalism compensated for intolerable social deficiencies, particularly because it permitted men to explain the difficulties of the present by the sins of outsiders in the past. The emotional fervor of this nationalism serves a two-fold purpose. It creates the loyalties for which masses of desperate men long and it shifts the blame for their difficulties to outsiders.

Hence the West is vulnerable not only, or not so much, for its faults of the past, but because it is the source from which still radiate the disruptive cultural and social influences that disturb all other societies and because its own people have escaped the penalties of their guilt. And most vulnerable is the United States, because it is most Western and because it has suffered least. In countries where ownership of individual homes is limited to members of a hated master class, the fact that so many Americans have possessions is often a sign that they are all members of a master — that is, of an exploiting — nation.

By contrast, the persistent will to believe that the Soviet Union is progressive — despite even the Khruschev revelations or the events in Hungary — is supported by the fact that the Russian people in their poverty seem closer, more comprehensible, and therefore more sympathetic to those who live under strains similar to their own.

3

Paradoxically, in these societies the intensity of the strain increases with the attainment of power or positions of prestige. As we became at home in Zagreb we began to recognize a veritable host of men with brief cases — clerks, managers, technicians, and civil servants. Ultimately we discovered that the problems of life for the members of this group were difficult and disturbing. And we understood better the professors who conferred with us, when we recognized them too as members of this group.

We spent a weekend at the seaside. The old resort town on the Adriatic had been built by the nobility and the wealthy middle classes of central Europe in the 1890s. Now it had fallen on meager days; it barely survived on the summer patronage of German vacationers eager for a bargain. When we arrived, the great Edwardian hotel seemed empty; we had our choice of rooms. We sat alone at dinner and the surprised waiter scurried about to pull together a meal.

Beyond the lobby was a long corridor with a door at its far end. From where we sat, we could see little groups of people passing through the door, some of them in costume. Idly we inquired as to what was going on, and were surprised at the abrupt answer: "Nothing."

Now our curiosity was aroused. What did the waiter mean, "Nothing"? Obviously all those men and women were going somewhere.

The worried little man shrugged this all off. We would not be interested. It was just a kind of "folklore" in there. But we were indeed interested in folklore. Could we go and watch?

We received a grudging consent and passed along the corridor. Opening the French doors, we discovered ourselves in an immense ballroom. Against one wall was an orchestra, enthusiastically supplying conventional Continental jazz to the dancers on the crowded floor. These were predominantly young, many of them boys and girls, having a gay time on a Saturday night. They were well dressed, some of them in evening clothes; and the little tables around the floor were liberally set with bottles of wine. It might have been a college prom back home!

Only it was hard to understand who these people were. We knew enough of Yugoslav prices from the shopwindows. The young men were spending for the evening, and the girls had spent for their gowns, the equivalent of the highest month's salary paid by the state. Had they anything in common with the masses who watched the movies on the square?

Later, back in Zagreb, we put our questions to a friendly official. What made this ball possible in a regime of socialist austerity? It was hard to believe, as we were told, that these were "economic criminals" spending illegitimately gotten gains. Surely the state was more effective than that in its controls. But we got nothing more than apologetic evasions.

We had hit upon one of the great underlying problems of the new societies. Their historical development had not left them a substantial middle class; and now, although often committed to an ideal of equality, they were uncomfortably making places for men of superior status, position, and power.

Every new industrial development called for the employment of technicians, engineers, and managers. At the same time, the elaboration of governmental and party services opened positions for an army of clerks and officials. The civil service in Iran, for instance, more than tripled in size in the

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last decade. In the Soviet Union by now there are some 24 million white-collar employees. These positions require specialized skills and training and they impose upon some of the men who occupy and hold them power and responsibility.

Such men are moved by the desire for rewards commensurate with the risks they take and with the skills they bring to their tasks. After many years of hardship and struggle they naturally expect that somehow their efforts will bring them whatever pleasures their society can afford.

The political leaders know by now their dependence upon these elements of the population. They realize furthermore that the means of coercion that keep men at the assembly line or peasants at their plows will not keep an engineer effectively at his drafting board or induce a manager to remain honest or to keep a plant producing efficiently. There is consequently unremitting pressure upon the state to create genuine incentives to satisfy and to stimulate its bureaucrats.

Yet it is not easy to do so. Resources are limited. The rulers must also keep in mind the needs of the masses of laborers; and the managerial groups themselves are not sure of what they want.

These managers and "workers of the brain" differ from their opposite numbers in our society in three vital respects. They are, to begin with, all bureaucrats. There are, of course, significant differences among the monolithic economy of the Soviet Union, the pluralistic socialism of Yugoslavia, and the limited free enterprise of Greece, Turkey, or Iran. But in all of them the state plays a dominant directing role in the productive system; and in all of them the acquisition and retention of desirable managerial posts calls not only for technical competence but for political loyalty if not for actual party membership. That creates a general uneasiness and a sense of insecurity which disturbs men's work in the laboratory or at the desk and follows them home and intrudes on their leisure.

Furthermore, these people are isolated in their own society. In the United States, or France, or England, the holders of similar places sprang mostly from a middle class with long historical traditions and values of its own. They enjoyed a defined relationship to the landed aristocracy, to the great capitalists as well as to the laborers and peasants beneath them in the social order. They were thus able to develop a style of life appropriate to their status; they operated with recognized norms in disposing of their income, in buying a car or a home, in joining a society or subscribing to a magazine.

There is no such stability in the choices made by managers in societies undergoing rapid economic change. In the socialist regimes the landowners and capitalists have been entirely liquidated. In countries like Iran and Egypt, where the old aristocracy still persists, it is regarded with distrust as reactionary and as tainted with foreign imperialist connections. For the rest, there are only the masses of laborers and peasants. Ideologically, the bureaucrats are perforce driven to insist that the working class is the only progressive force in the nation; yet they by no means wish to be identified with it in their mode of living. The servants of the people know the immense difficulties in the way of raising the general standards of material existence, yet they are unwilling to wait for decent homes or for a taste of personal pleasure until enough is available for everyone. The conflict is often resolved by elaborate systems of indirect rewards. But even so there is a strain that mars the enjoyment.

Finally, as time goes on, the managers become concerned about the future of their children. Family relationships have changed radically in these societies in recent years; but the anxiety to provide a desirable place for one's sons and daughters persists. The manager or technician cannot pass on his own position to his son; nor does he have wealth to leave in inheritance. Yet he is fearful of the alternative of degradation into the mass of laborers or peasants. Hence, the pre-eminent emphasis on education in these societies. The rapid expansion of the universities is frankly professional in objective. This is the means of preparing the technicians who will occupy the desirable places of the future.

The growth of the educational apparatus is impressive even by American standards. Zagreb's university has 14,000 students; Belgrade's, 40,000. Fully 60,000 are enrolled in the universities of Cairo. The Soviet Union accommodates almost 2 million in more than 800 institutions of higher education.

But this very expansion threatens to be self-frustrating. Desirable places may not be found for everyone; and there is acute fear of competition. Paradoxically, therefore, countries which are themselves underdeveloped are often attracted by the prospects of developing their less-developed neighbors. The Russians send technicians into the Near East, while the Yugoslavs build a dam in Syria and the Egyptians send aid to Yemen and Kuwait. This concern adds a special dimension to the nationalism of such countries. More important, it reflects a deep instability in societies with a great mass base and a much smaller elite group at the top.

Much might become comprehensible from this perspective if only we knew more about these groups. Too often we have accepted literally the totalitarian or socialist views of their own society. We are constantly being surprised by events that run counter to those conceptions. No one predicted what happened in Poland or Hungary; or indeed, what happened in Israel and Egypt. No one can predict now the likely shape of developments in Ceylon, Indonesia, or India. For the critical men in these new societies are new in type and subject to tensions we can scarcely imagine. Yet they will certainly play a decisive role in the future history of their own countries, and perhaps of ours as well.

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An Atlantic Story

NATHANIEL LAMAR, *who was born in Atlanta, Georgia, twenty-two years ago, prepared for Harvard at Phillips Exeter. He majored in English and found particular stimulus for his writing in the courses which he took under Archibald MacLeish. Mr. LaMar's first story in the* Atlantic, *"Creole Love Song," won the Dana Reed Award at Harvard and was reprinted in* The Best American Stories, 1956. *Last autumn he began to work on his first novel; and to assist in its completion, we have awarded him an Atlantic Grant in Fiction.*

THE MUSIC TEACHER

by NATHANIEL LAMAR

THAT day it was the middle of the summer, only a week before Mrs. Howard's sad, sudden death. That day, all things were conducive. On that day, even the music room was conducive. On that particular day the music room was like the seaside, with the afternoon sun shining into six big windows; and the cast-off beach chairs; and blue vases of water lilies. Valencia watched him from the windows as he came, walking up the driveway.

He was very young, for a music teacher, Mr. Davies. He usually wore a seersucker suit, left over from the days when he was in college. He was scarcely more than a boy, and yet his hair was beginning to come out. Strands of it fell on the white keys of the piano.

Luana the maid had already warned against him. Luana had swarthy skin and long brown hair. Luana attracted every man who looked at her, and no wonder. She had fine legs. She wore shoes with ice-pick heels. "I would beware of him, Valencia, if I was you. That so-called Mr. Davies," she said. "I've seen the way he looks at you. He may have elegant manners, but he's so ugly. He is as ugly as homemade sin. And his hair. His hair is falling out. It's coming out by the handful, can't you see?"

Her father had warned against him. Her father sometimes watched Luana's legs. He sometimes gazed at the seams of Luana's stockings with undivided attention as Luana walked this way and that way, balancing a glass of whiskey and water on a tray. Her father relied on his whiskey and water more and more. "I don't like the worshipful attitude that he has toward you," he said. "Oh yes, Valencia, he definitely has a worshipful attitude. And it's not healthy. It's not the way a normal young man his age should act. You're sixteen now. You mustn't go running to your mother with this. Your mother is too ill to be worried."

Even her young brother, Mark, hated Mr. Davies. Mark was eleven years old, and advanced and brilliant in a peculiar way. All day long he drew beautiful pictures of women's faces on scraps of paper. Women always wearing strange, enormous wedding-cake hats adorned with leaves and stars. Women with heart-shaped lips. When it came time for Mark's piano lesson Mark would sit down at the big concert grand and say, in a deliberately high-pitched, effeminate voice, "Do I arch my wrists correctly, Mr. Davies?" And then he would confide certain things — family secrets — but in such a diabolical way. "Do you think my mother is beautiful, Mr. Davies?" Mark would say. "She used to be beautiful. Terribly, until she developed a malignant growth. The doctors have operated once to remove it, but now she has another. It's hidden somewhere in her body and they cannot find it, Mr. Davies."

Mr. Davies did not know what to say. Mr. Davies was so timid that if he saw a bird's egg fall from a nest in a tree he would shut his eyes and put his hands over his ears. Yet, in the end, when it was all over he would go to the spot and look at the wrinkled rubbery shell, and the little white bird-bones, and the soft yellow beak. And he might even smile. He was so anxious to please that he might smile at anything.

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After the music lessons, just as he was leaving the house, Mrs. Howard always waylaid him. She sat on the front terrace in a lounge chair with a blanket spread over her legs. She was having chills constantly, though it was the middle of summer. She would always smile at young Mr. Davies, because she thought him handsome in an odd way. And she sympathized with him. She sympathized, though for what exactly, she did not know. May-belle Wallace, who had been the one to recommend him as a music teacher, said that he had been sick. He had been sick for a year or more, said May-belle, but apparently May-belle Wallace did not know the nature of his illness, and now he was supposedly completely recovered. This was the thing that confused Mrs. Howard: she did not know what to picture to herself when she tried to imagine a man being sick. She had never seen her husband sick. When she tried to imagine a man ill she thought of some secret weakness. Some quiet masculine weakness, concealed from a worried woman behind the locked door of a bathroom, perhaps. But whatever it was she sympathized. She smiled at lonely young Mr. Davies, and that was her way of detaining him as he came down the driveway.

"Mr. Davies, what do you think of this weather?" she would say. "It's very chilly, isn't it?"

Even if it was the loveliest of days, Mr. Davies would agree. He would grin and say, "Yes, yes." With excitement, he would say, "You're right, Mrs. Howard." Perhaps he knew she would soon die.

2

Just two days before the unfortunate incident — a week before Mrs. Howard died — she waylaid him again, in the garden. "Mr. Davies, would you please wait a moment?" she said. "I want to talk to you about the welfare of my children." The breeze blew her dress about her legs in heavy folds, because she had lost so much weight. She was leaning against the trunk of a tree. "You've had such a considerable influence on them, in one way or another, Mr. Davies, that sometimes I think it's dangerous." She smiled nervously, in that perverse way of people who have a glimpse of death.

But young Mr. Davies did not say a word.

"Do you write music? I mean, do you compose?"

"No," he said. "I intend to, someday. But . . . but . . . you see, I've been very ill," he said. "So very ill. I've been . . ." Suddenly his eyes flashed. He narrowed those wide-open eyes of his, and his eyebrows leapt up, and he looked almost like a different person: excited, very beautiful. "I . . . I don't know just when, but someday, I hope to . . . to . . ." Mr. Davies was so nervous! Mr. Davies was so excited!

"It's odd that you don't compose," said Mrs. Howard. "Because I have dreamed of you more than once. It's always the dream of . . . I dream that you are composing a melody for my Valencia. When you're very ill, they say the future goes by in the form of a dream. And I believe it," she said.

But young Mr. Davies was deeply calm once more. He was his own smiling self once again now, and as he smiled it could be seen that he had long, unattractive, rodent-like teeth. He had a rabbit's teeth.

But if, when he smiled, it could be seen that he had long and ugly rabbit-like teeth, why was it, then, that until the day — until the very day of the unfortunate incident — why did Valencia sympathize with him? Why did he interest her so? What did she see in him?

"Valencia, you must be very careful," said her father. Her mother's illness had begun to weigh heavily on him, and he usually lounged about all day long in linen slacks, and old white tennis shoes, sipping his whiskey and water. Sometimes he would sit for hours in the music room, listening to Valencia play, still sipping his whiskey and water. He went to bed fuddled and glassy-eyed. But on beautiful days, when they went to the beach and her father stripped down to his bathing trunks, he looked much younger than his age. He would go in the water a middle-aged man and come out with his hair wet, over his eyes, looking as handsome as a boy.

"I give you fair warning now, Valencia," he said. "You're treading on dangerous ground with Mr. Davies. Unless you *want* to get involved . . ."

"I certainly don't see anybody falling in love with him," said Luana. Lately Luana went with them to the beach because Mrs. Howard was always too ill and tired to go. And lately Luana had frequent talks, late in the evening, with Mr. Howard in the garden. "Haven't you ever been in love with anybody? What's his name?" insisted Luana. "I mean his first name. Don't you even know the man's Christian name?"

But Mr. Davies was not the kind of person you would imagine to have a first name. Nor would you be tempted to wonder how he might look with his hair disheveled, or eating, or taking a bath. By what fantastic power, then, did he manage to keep her after her music lesson was over, listening to him talk about the seashore, or his collection of queer pencils, or a book he had read?

It was because Mr. Davies captivated her. He had the ability to stimulate and captivate her by talking about a certain person. One particular person. It was the way Mr. Davies talked about him. It was his excited, affectionate, and glowing descriptions of this person. This friend. This "Robert." *Amorous* descriptions, almost! For instance, "Last night, I read a French poem," Mr. Davies would say. "Of course my best friend Robert says the obscene parts and even all the funny parts are sad. Incredibly sad, he says. Comedy is always at the

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expense of the future. I don't know what he means, except that I know that he is rather deep and thoughtful. You see, I'm ugly," said Mr. Davies. "I'm ugly and there's no debate about that, but he is . . ."

Or another time, "What is love, between friends?" Mr. Davies would say. That was his central topic, his theme song, so to speak. "I love Robert, and often I wonder what it would be like if he were to go away, or I. The future, don't you see. Every day I'd expect him to return, no matter how long, you see."

Or, "Of course we share just one room between us." And Mr. Davies seemed to blush slightly, but there was no need. No one would ever be tempted to wonder what that room was like. "We've roomed together since we were fifteen, in boarding school," he said. "We started as roommates, but Robert . . . recently . . . Robert was away for a while. Recently he was . . ." Why must Mr. Davies always get just to that point and suddenly become so excited? So terribly excited!

When Valencia told Mark and her father about it they laughed and winked at each other. "I knew it! I knew it!" sang the precocious Mark. Mark and her father suggested their meaning, just by the way they laughed. They even made her laugh.

"Well," said Mr. Howard. "This explains why he's so . . . so . . . *delicate*," he said. And he made as if to flutter his eyelids, in an *imitative* gesture. "You mustn't repeat it to your mother, Valencia. That would worry your mother terribly. And, oh, I've seen them before," said Mr. Howard. "One year there was a group of them who came down to the beach. One summer," he said. "But of course since he's that way . . . I mean, he won't make any advances, Valencia. So you needn't worry about that. If he ever begins to talk that way again, about this friend of his, tell him that you don't want to hear it. Say that you definitely do not want to hear about it. Do you understand, Valencia?"

"Yes, I understand," she said. But if she really understood, why did she think about it every hour? Why did she always think about *him?* "Robert," she would say to herself, while she was playing a soft prelude. "Robert," she would say, under her breath: this beautiful Robert. Mr. Davies had described him to her as "beautiful," which is a daring way for one man to describe another. It was embarrassing to hear. It was so embarrassing, in fact, that she felt almost as if she were dreaming, and undressed, with Mr. Davies looking on. And yet.

She thought about it constantly, every hour. She thought about all sorts of things, because there were some things that she could not resist. "Are you ever lonely, Mr. Davies, with a friend like him?"

"Oh yes," he said. "Yes, I'm lonely. Dear Lord, yes," he said. "The time when you're loneliest is when you are so close to someone that you . . . Sometimes I'm so lonely that I can't sleep at night. Sometimes I become so upset." Mr. Davies stared at her with his eyes narrowed, and his eyebrows leapt up. *Strange* Mr. Davies! He was like a piece of sky through a rip in a cloud. He stared at Valencia so intently, she wondered if he might be slightly out of his mind. Slightly "off" in the head. But the thing that excited her, the thing that set her on fire: "You see, Robert has been away," said Mr. Davies. "For a while he was in a madhouse. Oh, I know it is politely called a rest home. But I *know* what it is, you see. I know, Valencia." It was the first time he had ever called her by her Christian name. "It was a madhouse, and there's no debate about that," said Mr. Davies. "But now that Robert has come back to me, all will be well. He knew people there, and some of them are even allowed to write letters to him. But such strange letters you have never seen, Valencia. Never, in your young life. And yet, do you know what he sometimes says? He says that he wants to go back. Back there, because he has no friends and is so lonely. Except for me, of course. He has me," said Mr. Davies. "I won't let him go back, Valencia. I promise, I'll never let him go back to that rest home again!" *Strange* Mr. Davies! He captivated her. He confused her so, she did not know whether to laugh or cry.

But not to worry. There was Robert. All the time, Robert was at the very heart of her thoughts.

"If that Mr. Davies was like other men," said Luana, "there'd be only one thing that he'd really want. You're still young, Valencia, so I guess I won't name what that thing is." Luana, who sometimes took late-evening walks with Mr. Howard, through the flower beds in her stocking feet.

3

But Mr. Davies did not matter. It was Robert, and Robert alone. And that was why, on the last day, on the day when all things were conducive — a week before Mrs. Howard died — that day when all was indecisive, Valencia felt a sudden thrill when she saw Mr. Davies from the windows of the music room. He was walking up the driveway, he was coming through the garden. She could not resist: she put on a yellow dress, in anticipation of Robert.

"What is his name, Mr. Davies?" she asked as she sat down at the piano that day. "His other name, I mean. His surname. Someday I would like to see him."

"His name is Robert Flinton," he said.

"I would like . . ." said Valencia. "Someday, couldn't I *meet* him?"

But it was the middle of the summer, and for some reason Mr. Davies suddenly seemed to take

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on new life. What had she said to make him suddenly so warm, so intimate? Mr. Davies took off his seersucker jacket. Slowly, he began to inch his chair closer to the piano. Valencia sensed it. She sat playing her preludes and fugues with her back absolutely straight, looking neither to the right nor to the left.

But next Mr. Davies *would* touch her *hands!* "Your wrists," he said, almost in a whisper, "must be arched like this. Do you see, Valencia? And your fingers must hit precisely, like little hammers. Especially for Bach." And now he was actually holding her fingers!

"Oh, that's all right," she said nervously. "You don't have to go to that much trouble, just to show me . . ."

"But I want to show you how," he said.

Why did she suddenly smile that way? Perhaps he would not have been tempted, had she not smiled.

"I'm . . . I'm somewhat upset today," he said. He was trying to be gentle, but instead he stammered, he fumbled. He himself was scarcely more than a boy. "My friend — Robert — would like you," he said nervously, coming closer and closer. And now Mr. Davies was touching her shoulders! "Valencia, Robert would like the way your hair is tied behind your neck. Valencia! Robert would like the way your arms are so smooth!" As he tried to kiss her, as he tried to steal a kiss, so to speak, she of course fought him away.

She was trying hard to control herself, but she was about to burst into tears.

"Oh," said Mr. Davies suddenly. "I must be greatly overstepping my bounds." There was a great silence in the music room. It was enough to make one laugh — "overstepping." "Yes . . . overstepping . . . oh, please, excuse me," he said. "Will you excuse me this time? Just this time? You see, I was trying to be gentle, and now I've overstepped . . ."

But she was trembling. Tears were rolling down her cheeks.

"I didn't think you would take it in that way," he said. And he smiled the most fantastic smile. It was the smile of a demented person: beautiful, in spite of ugliness. Very beautiful, in spite of yellow, rabbit-like teeth.

"How else did you think I'd take it, Mr. Davies! I was trying to be kind. Just trying to be kind to you," she said. "But nobody can be kind to you. What made you think I'd ever want a kiss from you!"

"But it was Robert," he said, "who . . ."

She did not let him finish. She was not going to be played with any more. Fortunately, she remembered her father's words, just at the nick of time; otherwise, who knows what he might have said?

"I don't want to hear it."

That was the last thing she ever said to him, because he did not come back again, ever. But after all, it was not him she cried for. It was certainly not him, no indeed. She was crying for someone she would never even meet. This person. This Robert. Robert Flinton. She would remember Robert Flinton long after she had forgotten Mr. Davies. Even if Robert Flinton had never *existed*, she would think about him. Even if Mr. Davies had invented it all, to . . . to trick her! Repulsive Mr. Davies! Valencia did not go to the windows to watch him as he went down the driveway.

Mrs. Howard was perplexed. She was sitting in her lounge chair on the terrace, and she called out to Mr. Davies as he was leaving, but he did not look her way. She raised her hand and waved. "Mr. Davies," she said. Well, not to worry: she would see him again very soon. Next week, next music lesson. And yet Mrs. Howard was alarmed. "Mr. Davies!" If, at that particular moment, she had known his Christian name, she would have called him by it. He was walking straight ahead, down the driveway, and Mrs. Howard's question suddenly came back like a dream: Whatever could have been the nature of his supposed illness? Could it have been physical or mental?

"Mr. Davies!" she said, and tears came to her eyes. Why didn't he answer her! "Mr. Davies, what do you think of this weather?" But still, apparently he neither saw nor heard. Mr. Robert Flinton Davies went past her like the future, and in less than a week's time she was dead.

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Since he gave up flying in 1948, JOHN FITCH *has driven in most of the major road races of North and South America and Europe. In the 1952 Pan-American road race in Mexico, as the first American to drive for Mercedes-Benz, he set a record for the final leg, averaging 133 mph for the 230 miles. More recently he has driven in many major events in Europe and the United States. Alberto Ascari, at the time of his death in 1955, was regarded as one of the greatest racing drivers of all time.*

ASCARI'S LAST CURVE

by JOHN FITCH

1

ALBERTO ASCARI, like his father, died at the wheel of a racing car. Both were thirty-six years old and both died on the 26th of the month — twice the 13 that Alberto feared. It was a fate that his race-wise friends could have predicted for him, but who can say that the Ascaris, father and son, chose the wrong career?

The shadow of Ascari's father and his mother's fear that Alberto would follow him made Alberto aware of the stakes involved. But young Ascari was compelled to race, and at seventeen he overcame his mother's opposition by threats to run away from home. Secretly at first, he raced motorcycles with moderate success until his opportunity to graduate to four wheels came in 1940 when he drove an early Ferrari in the Mille Miglia. Ascari never seemed to doubt where he was going.

His real success began with Maserati cars after the war, and at Modena in September of 1947 he had his first taste of the victory that was so sweet to him. His star rose quickly and in 1949 he was champion of Italy. From then on, he was always a driver to be reckoned with in the battle for the world's championship, and this he won with Ferrari in 1952 and 1953. He went everywhere that races were held. In Spain, South America, Italy, England, France, and Germany, his skill was polished to a razor's edge by experience and the counsel of his veteran teacher and friend, Gigi Villoresi. This was one of the closest and most successful master-protégé combinations in sports history. Villoresi was at the peak of his powers just after the war when Ascari was finding himself. Gigi, a gentle and cultivated bachelor, guided Ascari's apprenticeship and taught him his technique of cornering, which may account for a long absence of serious crashes. The secret is to brake early and drive smoothly around the corner with full power on. This gives a margin of safety as well as being fast. When the corner is entered too fast a lot of correction is necessary before the car is steady enough to take full throttle again. But Villoresi taught Ascari to concentrate on leaving the corner fast, benefiting by a higher speed all the way to the next corner.

This and a knowledge of *which* corners to leave fast and which should be entered fast in order to get the best lap speed were the key to Ascari's mastery, I think. For Alberto, these were the tips that counted; they were the inside story on the only world that mattered to a man whose star was a checkered flag at the end of a hot and dusty road.

Ascari became a hard-minded, analytical, grimly determined racing machine. However much he suffered off duty with ulcers, sleeplessness, and apprehension, behind the wheel he became a cold computer of distance, time and tires, corners and competition, and he got his checkered flags, luck and family history notwithstanding. He became stonily indifferent to danger, and the thought of such emergencies as lost wheels or broken suspensions, two of the completely uncontrollable hazards he faced, left him unmoved.

He brought a Ferrari to Indianapolis in 1952 and won the respect of everyone from the perennial railbirds to the speedway's president, Wilbur Shaw, by his masterful handling of a basically unsuitable car. The Ferraris were designed for road racing rather than for the relatively constant speeds and the greater distance of the Indianapolis event.

There were three similar Ferraris at Indianapolis that year, but their American drivers bowed to the seemingly inevitable when the cars refused to qualify. The drivers switched to the native Offenhausers. Not Alberto. Fired by pride in his Italian car, Ascari, a foreign underdog a long way from home, modified the car, changed tactics, and tried harder. Finally, with his face a picture of determination that truly approached ferocity, he forced the car to

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a qualifying speed, ensuring his entry in the race.

He knew where he was going all right, and he was well on his way when a collapsing wheel spun him helplessly into the infield and out of the race. He was in the northeast curve traveling at about 120 mph, not a remarkable speed until you consider the curves at Indianapolis. No one of these curves is like any other, and all are bounded on the outside by a cement wall that has proved to be immovable. The curves are slightly banked to a degree designed to prevent centrifugal loading at 85 mph, and they are all bumpy. At 120 mph, Ascari was precariously holding his heavy Ferrari to the smooth line that would carry him onto the next straightaway, while it bounced, jerking and skidding, toward the wall. At this moment the outside rear wheel, the one doing the most to resist centrifugal force, collapsed, crashing the lurching car onto the pavement in a shower of sparks. The sensation must have been something like falling through a trap door on a roller coaster. Alberto was no longer a driver, but a passenger in his spinning car as it described a large arc, at first toward the dreaded wall and then looping down into the unpaved infield where it came to rest in a cascade of plowed earth. To have a wheel collapse at a speed of more than 100 mph is not a trifling matter. But Alberto was concerned only with his next race. It was not his first or his last wheel failure. The next was in Germany.

In 1950, 1951, and 1952, Ascari had won the Grand Prix of Germany on the Nurburgring, which is known as a driver's course. Here the road twists and plunges erratically through the Eifel Mountains in a particularly wicked way that awards courage and skill a clear dividend of speed. There are few straights allowing a moment's respite and these are punctuated with humpbacked bridges which send a fast car soaring. Here, in 1951, Ascari demonstrated the high order of racecraft he commanded when, with a small lead over his old rival Fangio, he calmly drew into the pits before his last lap. The Ferrari team was frantic. Ascari wanted the tires changed before committing himself to that long (14-mile) last lap rather than risk a failure. He knew he had time to change before Fangio passed and that he could hold Fangio if he had new tires. He was right, but the strain on the Ferrari team was almost unbearable.

In 1953, his efforts to make it four wins in a row were surely the ultimate in cold-blooded determination. He had a 50-second lead over Fangio (again) one kilometer from the pits when he lost a front wheel in the fastest part of the circuit at about 140 mph. By means known only to Alberto, he not only avoided a crash but arrived at the pits at the same time as Fangio. He had covered the kilometer on three wheels only 50 seconds slower than Fangio on four wheels! Then, when most drivers would have put the brakes on and ruined the brake drum, he let the car coast to a stop even though it was beyond his pit. Furthermore, he left the engine going, so that when the mechanics arrived with a jack, he was able to drive backwards to the pit while a mechanic steered with the jack handle. With a new wheel he sailed off and his next flying lap was a record, in spite of the fact that the brake drum was damaged and out of balance. He then took over Villoresi's car, which Gigi was always glad to give to his erstwhile pupil, and set up another lap record. Just when it appeared conceivable that he could do it again and win in spite of everything, the car broke and he retired. He quietly packed his helmet and goggles into his bag, put on his customary sports jacket, and walked out of the pits to a spontaneous ovation for a man who had tried and lost.

But Ascari usually won. On that hard championship trail that kept him packing, traveling, practicing, and racing nearly every weekend, the novelty became the race Ascari didn't win. The results were almost monotonous; still no one denied full credit to his determined skill and applied racecraft. He was the idol of the *tifosi*, Italy's racing fans, and his nickname, "Ciccio" (roughly, Chubby), was universally known in Italy. The name Ciccio was a measure of his real popularity. Instead of being awed by their world champion driver — and this is an awesome thing in Italy — his fans named him familiarly and affectionately.

2

Ascari was an undemonstrative, almost non-Latin, Italian whose quiet behavior was as unpretentious as his stodgy figure. A show of temperament or grandstanding of any kind was simply never suggested by anything in his public or private behavior. He didn't care for crowds or attention from the press, but he put in a dutiful appearance at the many prize-giving functions whose success depended upon his presence. After the function was over he would take a solitary walk, clearing his mind in the fresh air and looking, in his neat blue suit, a little like a respectable headwaiter after hours. He was never exuberant, but his smile came most frequently in the company of racing friends, when concerned with the familiar questions of his profession.

At Indianapolis, he whimsically solved the language problem by learning one innocuous word and using it for all occasions. Everything was "fine, fine" for Alberto at the brickyard. No one could remember such an agreeable fellow.

He was superstitious, as are most drivers whose continued well-being is dependent upon such vagaries as the flight trajectory of birds (which can knock a man out at high speed), the ability of a battered tire to resist blowout, or the good fortune to miss an invisible patch of oil dropped by another car. Good drivers often see their comrades crash for reasons which are never completely understood. The results of chance happenings on the race course

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are drastic enough to tempt the most literal-minded to consult astrologists. Like many another driver seeking a neutrality pact with fate, Ascari shunned black cats, the number 13, and so forth, but he also had a private anathema: the Monthlery circuit outside Paris, the road where his father died. It was too deeply fraught with association, even for Ascari.

And so Alberto Ascari became the Italian driver of his age in a country that knows racing and breeds good drivers. He was the World's Champion for two consecutive years, 1952 and 1953. Instead of easing up when on top, he demanded more of himself, became determined and dedicated to victory. His escapes became more frequent and miraculous. There never was a suggestion of retirement. He was an idol, and idols seldom quit at the peak of their powers.

It is conceivable that Ascari drove as though he could afford to die; that the circumstances of his life and times as Italy's champion demanded it of him, and that he acceded. To see him drive was to consider this possibility; for, though beautifully controlled and never wild, he used the full capacity of his car and every inch of road, leaving absolutely no margin for error.

Pressing for every second at high speed in Mexico, he anticipated a right curve over a hill but found a sharper left instead. His big Ferrari rocketed up the wall of a cut, rolled and skidded hundreds of yards down the road on its fragile alloy roof. Luckily for Ascari, the Ferrari was a coupé.

Ascari never liked the Mille Miglia or its Mexican counterpart, the Pan-American, because these long-distance, city-to-city races on the open road, which can at best be only partially remembered, did not suit his thrusting style of driving close to the border of control. His technique was better suited to the short and fierce Grand Prix on known circuits. A Mille Miglia crash in 1951 resulted in the death of a spectator, and the ensuing process of law deprived Ascari of third-party insurance until the case was settled. He therefore abstained from entering the event out of consideration for spectators until 1954, when, the case settled, he won for Lancia in one of his most glorious victories. Though he had entered with distaste and even with misgiving in a Lancia that was as yet unproved for long-distance races, he and Villoresi practiced assiduously. A truck rammed him the morning before the start, on the streets of Brescia as he set out for a final check of the first miles; but despite the unpropitious sign, he made the start and fought for 1000 miles in appalling weather to win the race least suited to his nature. He said he was especially glad for Villoresi's sake as his old friend had crashed in practice and was unable to start.

He fought a prodigious, race-long battle with Fangio and Farina at Monza in 1953 only to have his first place snatched from him on the last curve of the last lap by a crash. Villoresi crossed the line himself and rushed back, his face a mask of anxiety, to find his friend regretting only the lost victory.

In May, 1955, four days before he died, at the moment of gaining the lead in the Grand Prix of Europe, he crashed through a barrier and plunged into the harbor at Monte Carlo. He had just burst out of the dark tunnel under the Casino and rushed down the ramp to the chicane, a barricaded jog that carried the race onto the quay bordering the basin with its white yachts decked with fluttering pennants, when a snatching brake or perhaps a film of oil left by the last Mercedes, retiring at this moment in a swirl of blue smoke, upset the delicate 100 mph balance. Ascari's Lancia could not be saved. In an explosion of fence splinters and sandbags he catapulted into the harbor in a geyser of spray and steam that towered like a depth charge. For a dreadful twenty seconds the milling green surface gave up only a few oily bubbles while divers, prepared for just this emergency, scrambled into action. A pack of cars roared by, the last slowing as its driver twisted in his seat looking back. A light blue helmet bobbed to the surface, and Ascari's streaked face was beneath it. On leaving the quay he had missed a steel mooring by inches, and not to have been knocked unconscious or caught in the sinking car was a bonus of luck, but to Alberto it was "nothing, nothing."

From the brief convalescence at his home in Milan it was only a few minutes' drive to Monza, Italy's premier circuit, where he had seen his father win in 1924. There, on the familiar road, while trying a Ferrari before the next Sunday's race, Alberto Ascari took his last curve. The curve where he crashed could be taken at full speed easily in the carefully prepared car he was driving; the exact circumstances of his death probably never will be known. The sports car he was driving was 20 mph slower than a first-class Grand Prix car at this point, which means that the Ascari talent could not have been brought to bear, much less ruffled, by the driving situation in which he died. Some say he had not recovered from the Monte Carlo crash and suffered a sudden relapse or missed a gear. Whatever happened, the racing world lost one of its finest figures of all time.

His funeral brought a day of mourning for a nation stunned with grief. Milan, the business and financial center of Italy, was as quiet as a village when the fifteen canopied carriages required to carry the many wreaths inched past the silent mourners. On the black coffin rested Ascari's familiar light blue helmet. The procession was drawn by horses, feather-plumed and all black, and only the sorrowful clopping of hoofs could be heard from the streets lined with black drapes. A million people paid the only tribute left to give to a favorite prince who was lost in his full strength.

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The rewards of nonpublication are sometimes greater than what a successful article, widely circulated in print, will produce. In the tale that follows, an energetic magazine writer shows how a half-dozen fees can be made to blossom where only one was expected. BRUCE BLIVEN, JR., *is the author of many articles and several books;* Atlantic *readers will recall his account (May, 1954) of the fantastic high-speed typewriting contests which were prevalent around the turn of the century.*

MY TABLE TENNIS RACKET

by BRUCE BLIVEN, JR.

1

THE year was 1946. Joe Louis was the world's heavyweight champion. Ted Williams was the American League's most valuable player. Jack Kramer was monarch of men's lawn tennis. I was nearing the end of my first year as a full-time free-lance magazine writer.

I'd won no titles or honors. But I did hope to go on doing what I was doing. I liked it. I'd sold eight articles, which seemed to me to be an amazingly large number. Yet it was becoming increasingly hard to ignore what looked like a definite threat to my hope: my living expenses had been considerably larger than my total receipts. The money I had saved in the Army was almost all gone. And since I was already working seven days a week, as fast as I could urge my fingers to go, I felt I needed some improvement more subtle than promising myself to work harder. Even the beaver's eagerness has some natural limits.

For instance, I felt it would help to get better prices for articles. My biggest, most remunerative sale had been a piece for *Life*. I called on Robert Coughlan, then *Life's* text editor, thinking that it would be nice to wangle a second assignment from him. A sports personality close-up — an article about somebody on the order of, say, Louis, Williams, or Kramer — was the kind of thing I had in mind.

Coughlan looked profoundly bored. "We've got an awful lot of sports articles already in the works," he said. "On the other hand, we might be able to use something offbeat. Something light, on the amusing side."

My hopes were raised, if by less than one full millimeter. We talked for a while, trying to think of minor and peculiar sports. One of us — I don't remember which — brought up ping-pong.

"Is there a national ping-pong champion?" Coughlan asked.

"I think there must be," I said.

"Why don't you check?" Coughlan said. "It's just possible that he — if there is such a he — might make a piece."

It was an excellent suggestion, although it has taken me ten years to appreciate the value of Coughlan's advice. He was inviting me to latch onto as good a subject — in a way — as any free-lance writer could desire. I fear I may never find another in quite the same class.

His name is Richard Miles. I found him in the Public Library under "T" for "Table Tennis." The champion, according to the magazine *Table Tennis Topics*, was a twenty-year-old New Yorker who had won the national men's singles crown in 1945, had defended his title successfully in the spring of 1946, and was favored to win for the third time in 1947. I asked Miles to have lunch with me, and in an offbeat way he was great. Not many national champions at any sport are likely to joke about their game. Miles, a small, trim fellow with the indefinable air of titleholder about him, took a delightfully mocking view both of himself and table tennis. He said he thought that his game, for its size, was a lot of fun, but that for real challenge he recommended golf. While he enjoyed being champion, he said he preferred reading James Joyce or listening to Beethoven quartets.

When I turned in my article about Miles, *Life* seemed pleased with it. They promptly sent me a check for $1000 that made my bank account look markedly less forlorn. They scheduled the piece for an early issue and assigned Gjon Mili, one of the magazine's top photographers, to take multiple-exposure photographs of Miles in action. Everyone involved seemed happy, including the United States Table Tennis Association, which felt that the game was about to get an unusual but richly deserved publicity break.

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A day or two before the article should have gone to press, Miles and I were summoned to inspect the photographs. The champion's strokes, which were very fast indeed, had been too fast even for Mili's stroboscopic lights. The pictures were fascinating as abstract compositions of light patterns against a dark background. But there was simply no telling what they showed.

"They look like X-ray plates to me," Miles said, "and I'm afraid I may have broken my collarbone."

It was too late to take another batch of photographs in time to make the issue. The Miles story had to be held out. Coughlan thought it might be rescheduled after the forthcoming tournament — provided, of course, that Miles managed to keep his title.

Miles hid his disappointment well. "I'll do my best to win — just for the article's sake, of course," he said.

Miles's best was exceedingly good. He won the title for the third time, a feat only one other player, Lou Pagliaro, had ever managed. But *Life*, by late March, had cooled toward table tennis. Coughlan was very gentle in explaining to me that the editors had decided to forget about my piece.

"You can have it back. You can keep the money, but the article is yours. We realize that the manuscript is highly perishable, but there's certainly a chance that you can place it somewhere else."

That seemed more than fair — although I did hate to tell Miles, who would have to inform the Table Tennis Association, that our joint hopes had taken a severe jolt.

2

I took the article to Tim Cohane, sports editor of *Look*, and told him what had happened at *Life*. He didn't believe me. I got a written statement from Coughlan saying that the manuscript was all mine, free and clear, and that *Life* had no intention of printing anything about Dick Miles in the foreseeable future. Cohane still looked suspicious, feeling, I think, that some obscure inter-picture-magazine joke was being played on him. But to my delight he bought the article. Its text was just the same as originally, but I had updated it, of course, to include Miles's third victory. I got a check for $500.

"We want some good pictures to run with it," Cohane told me. "Frank Bauman, one of our top photographers, is going to take them."

I felt good. The extra check, for just a few hours spent on revision, was wholly welcome. But my pleasure was more than purely commercial. By this time, Miles and I were friends. I'd watched him practicing, worrying, winning for a year. I'd hung around with table tennis buffs long enough to agree with them that the reading public hardly ever appreciates how very good a national champion has got to be. I was anxious to see the piece in print for Dick's sake as well as my own.

Bauman's photographs turned out beautifully — especially a posed shot of Miles, shot upwards from around his ankles, with his teeth bared, in which the mild-mannered champion looked positively tigerish. The picture was so dramatic, in fact, that *Look* turned the whole project into a one-page, one-picture feature, which it ran shortly before the 1948 championships. My deathless 3800 words of prose had been boiled down to a succinct 200-word caption. My by-line had been omitted.

While I was trying to console myself with the thought that at least the spread was good publicity for Dick, he was battling his way to his fourth successive victory. That set an all-time table tennis record. I reread the carbon of my article. And for the first time the low, sneaky thought crossed my mind that perhaps there was an advantage to having magazines *not* print the Miles story. For there was the champion, his luster brighter than ever. And there was I with a ready-made manuscript — slightly dog-eared, but virtually intact — telling all about him.

By this time my fortunes as a free lance had improved. I was breaking even. Still I listened with greedy fascination whenever more successful magazine writers explained their professional strategies. It sometimes seemed as if there were as many "how to" theories as there were surviving free-lancers. I had heard that the secret was to specialize doggedly in one narrow field in order to get a maximum wordage out of a minimum of research and reporting. I'd been advised to get out of town ("Any New York editor will buy anything if the dateline is Lawton, Oklahoma!") and to stick as close as possible to the New York Public Library ("After all, every magazine article is just a rewrite of stuff in the back-issue files!"). One well-fed writer told me that numbers were the trick of the game; if you couldn't work a number into the title ("Seven Sure Ways to Success"), then, at the very least, you should make a minimum of three numbered points, in boldface, in the body of the piece, and that three, ten, and one hundred, in his experience, were the best numbers to use. Another craftsman assured me that, when in doubt, a free-lancer should always do a test-yourself quiz ("Are You a Considerate Spouse?"); for it, he said, is the basic staple of magazine journalism.

I'd heard countless other systems explained, yet no one had mentioned my particular racket: the imperishable manuscript. For all I knew, I had stumbled onto an original tactic. I began to think, giddily, that if I could sell the Miles story once or twice every year . . .

At any rate there could be no harm, all pipe dreams aside, in trying one more time. All my article needed, as far as I could see, was minor updating.

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Esquire's articles editor, when I suggested the idea of a piece on Dick Miles to him, looked intrigued. He had been looking for an offbeat sports personality story. What had happened at *Life* and *Look*, I gathered, amused him. I added the latest Miles news to the old text structure, retyped, kept my fingers crossed, and in late June, 1948, *Esquire* bought the article for $400.

In February, 1949 — to my astonishment — *Esquire* printed almost the whole thing, with photographs, under the title "Young Man on the Ball."

All of us were pleased: Miles, the Table Tennis Association, and I. For even though my desk drawer did look strangely empty, and though it was with a certain twinge that I crossed the note to myself, "Miles piece, where?" off my memo pad, I felt I ought to be realistic about the matter. No champion, after all, can win forever. Now that Dick was twenty-four, he had taken to calling himself "The Grand Old Man" of table tennis and to predicting his imminent dethronement. "I'm beginning to like playing as much as winning," Miles said. "And of course, in a champion, that's fatal." Prudence suggested that I close my books on Miles as an article subject. Three sales on what was, in substance, one article were clearly as good mileage as a writer could want from a manuscript.

Miles defaulted in 1950, after winning in 1949. He made a comeback in 1951. But in 1952, for the first time in eight years, he was beaten in the nationals. It was just for old times' sake, he said, that he entered the 1953 tournament. When he won his seventh championship that year, I wondered. In 1954 he raised the total to eight. Counting back on the calendar, I realized that it had been five years since a piece (mine) about him had been printed in any of the general magazines.

Then Dick appeared as a guest on the television show "I've Got a Secret." His secret was that he was the national table tennis champion. The panel was almost stumped. Even after it had learned that Miles was a champion at something that had to do with a table, the experts were making wild guesses. "Champion pie-eater?" somebody asked. I saw that Miles, despite my best efforts, was less celebrated than he deserved.

Sports Illustrated was getting ready to start publication. I dropped in to see Andrew Crichton, one of its editors.

"We're interested, among other things, in offbeat sports personality pieces," Crichton explained. I couldn't resist. Crichton thought it sounded like a funny idea.

I hurried home, dug out all my old carbons and notes, and tackled the Miles story for the fourth time. It was a completely new manuscript. For one thing, a new racquet surface (sponge instead of pebbled rubber) had been invented since the last go-around, so I had to bring the article abreast of the game's technological changes. Yet the piece did bear some unavoidable similarities to the three earlier versions. There was nothing I could do, after all, to vary the facts about Dick's birthplace, schooling, and early sports career.

Crichton liked it. I got a prompt letter of acceptance and a check for $750. I wrote back and said that while the article ought to stand up for a good six months, I did hope *Sports Illustrated* would run it before the 1955 tournament, since I naturally couldn't promise that the eight-time winner, good as he was, would pull off a ninth victory.

Crichton advised me not to worry. The piece wasn't exactly scheduled, he said, but it was well liked.

A couple of months later I got a call from a *Sports Illustrated* researcher, a girl with a mellifluous voice. "We were wondering," she cooed, "whether anybody has taken any good photographs of Miles."

I felt it was a bad omen. I was hardly surprised, when the weekend of the 1955 nationals had passed, that *Sports Illustrated* confined its coverage to the results, printed in its smallest type size. The winner (for the ninth time): Richard Miles.

Not long afterwards, I saw Dick. "I sure am sorry about the *Sports Illustrated* business," I said.

"Don't worry about it," Dick said.

"That's magazines for you," I said.

"It really makes no difference to me," Dick said. "Although I imagine that the Table Tennis Association is sort of disappointed."

"Of course," I said, "there's a chance that something can be salvaged. You are still the champion, after all. Now if I were just to bring the article up to date . . ."

Dick looked at me reproachfully. "I hate to tell you," he said, "but I've decided to let the title go."

I hated to hear it.

Miles didn't enter the 1956 championships, which were held in March at White Plains, New York. The men's singles title went to the junior champion, Irwin "Ginger" Klein. It's conceivable — hard as it is for me to face — that Dick has really and truly retired.

And yet I wonder. A man who has won a championship nine times must be tempted — if only for tidiness' sake — to try to make it a round number like ten.

I'll admit I'd like to see Dick try. I wouldn't be surprised if he could do it. A man who has sold an article four times naturally wonders whether he couldn't make it five.

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Books and Men

Sean O'Faolain, a Dubliner, is known through his writings as a sympathetic yet realistic interpreter of contemporary Irish life. His latest book, The Finest Stories of Sean O'Faolain, *has just been published under the Atlantic–Little, Brown imprint. For a deeper understanding of Mr. O'Faolain and of the problems confronting Irish writers, we have turned to* JOHN V. KELLEHER, *Associate Professor of Literature at Harvard. Mr. Kelleher is of Irish descent and a frequent traveler in Ireland.*

SEAN O'FAOLAIN

by JOHN V. KELLEHER

1

THAT Sean O'Faolain is the most distinguished living Irish writer is a true statement, but uninformative. In a small and somewhat intermittent literature "most distinguished living writer" is apt to be as dubious a term of praise as "the family beauty" — which may mean much or may not. A better description is that given by a young Texan reporter who interviewed him recently in Houston: "Mr. O'Faolain is a tall, erect, handsome Irishman who wears two pairs of glasses."

He does not wear both at once, but he does characteristically look at things two ways, as a susceptible romantic and as a cold-eyed realist always inquiring after facts and causes. This brings up a third short description, "first man of letters in Ireland today," as his publishers often refer to him on book jackets. He is eminently the man of letters — creative writer, essayist, critic, editor, biographer, pamphleteer, and literary journalist — and he is also the first Ireland has ever had, or the first to do the whole job. He undertook the work twenty-five years ago, uninvited and unencouraged, fully aware of what he was getting himself in for; and the only intelligible explanation for his action is that he was then, and is still, the most confirmed romantic born in Ireland this century.

His first book, the collection of short stories called *Midsummer Night Madness*, came out in 1932. He was then thirty-two years old, had a wife and child, and was earning his living as an English teacher in a normal school outside London. Edward Garnett wrote the preface for the book, alternating between praise of O'Faolain and rage against Ireland, which, Garnett growled, ranked somewhere below Bulgaria on the literary map of Europe. He knew; he was from Ireland himself. There on the one hand was the new Irish state, culturally a desert and apparently intent on even greater aridity. And here was yet another young Irish writer, of delicate talent, with the richest feeling for the Irish landscape in every mood and weather, a rebel, a scholar, a Gaelic speaker — who had to depend on the English to publish what he wrote so poignantly about a country that did not give a damn for his like. "How typical!"

As if to corroborate something about the title of his book, O'Faolain thereupon decided to go back to Ireland. He had been away six years, three in England, three in America, where he had been a Commonwealth Fellow at Harvard and had taught for a term at Boston College. Meanwhile he had kept in close touch with his native land, especially through A.E. and Frank O'Connor, and he had no sentimental illusions about the cultural scene he was re-entering. He couldn't have had. Between 1921, when he had graduated from University College, Cork, and 1926, when he had left for Harvard, his experience of post-Revolutionary Ireland had been, to say the least, intimate. He had been a publisher's commercial traveler, with the south and west of Ireland for his territory, and had not shot himself. During the Civil War of 1922–23 he had taken the Republican side and had served successively as a bomb maker, a guerrilla, director of propaganda for an I.R.A. division, and finally, for a few weeks in Dublin, as acting director of publicity for the whole Republican movement.

That was an unsettling experience. "For the first time I met our leaders, and I said to myself, 'My God, is this what we've got!'" And again:

> Though I was then about as ignorant a young man as you could find in the length and breadth of Europe . . . I had gumption enough to see, that if what we all knew between us about society or politics, in any intellectual sense, were printed consecutively it would not cover a threepenny bit, and that all we ever said, or ever published, with hardly an exceptional article, was . . . propaganda without any guiding concept. In that year I woke up.

He was always waking up, but at the time there was not much for him to wake up to. He taught for a while at a secondary school in Clare, till one

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morning a teacher with whom he roomed sat up in bed, rubbed his gray thatch, and said, "Well, Sean. Today I've been twenty-five years on the job. Think of that!" Sean thought of it and quit. He went back to Cork, took two M.A.'s, in Irish and English, edited a small political-literary weekly, walked and talked with Frank O'Connor, who was now county librarian, wrote incessantly, and finally escaped.

2

There were a few changes to note when he returned to Ireland in 1933. DeValera had just led the Republicans into office, where they were to remain uninterruptedly for sixteen years, at first cheered hopefully by O'Faolain, later hammered by him. Intellectual tone was now being set by the literary censorship, established in 1928; and for a kindly welcome-home the censors banned *Midsummer Night Madness*. More to the point was that the one magazine that could have printed his work, A.E.'s *Irish Statesman*, had folded in 1930, with the simultaneous lapse of A.E.'s energies and his American backers' money. Of course O'Faolain expected all this. He knew that he would have to write for English and American papers; and since he already had a reputation in London as that sort of editor's delight who can be counted on for better work than he is paid for, he knew he could support himself. His earnings, though, would inevitably be slimmer and his fame smaller than what he might have gained had he stayed in London and not chosen to identify himself with the literature of a country that now seemed resolutely receding from the attention of mankind.

The reason for his return was very simple. He had no choice. His romanticism was always the decisive element in his personality; it was fixated upon Ireland; and it translated itself emotionally and intellectually as patriotism, a concern for tradition, and the urge to express the unexpressed potentialities of his own people.

The same, of course, would be true of any other Irish writer. Where O'Faolain differs is in the peculiarly exact balance of his personality. In his creative writing his romanticism almost always dictates his subject. At that point an equal and opposite force, his realistic intelligence, comes into play and proceeds to deal with what it would never have chosen of its own accord, so that the quality of his work is determined by this double intransigence of emotional awareness and questioning mind, which, because neither can surrender, must somehow be reconciled. The reconciliation is not an easy process. The stories that best illustrate it are very quietly written, but behind them lies a great deal of other, more turbulent writing, historical, critical, and polemic, in which the principles that underlie his comment upon life and upon Ireland are tested and defined. Through this other writing, too, his exasperation is given healthy positive discharge. If he is one of the few Irish writers who have not suffered from the pip, it is because his nature impels him to get plenty of exercise. Abroad he interprets Ireland and defends her. At home he kicks her soundly and often where long experience tells him it will do her most good. For that the nearest vantage is obviously the best.

Naturally enough a large portion of the work he has addressed directly to Ireland is unknown here and will remain unknown. From 1940 to 1946 he edited *The Bell*, a monthly dedicated to two radical principles, the need to encourage Irish writers and the need to pay them. During the war years *The Bell* and the Saturday literary page of the *Irish Times* were the only means of publication and payment open to most of the writers; and O'Faolain was the only editor to whom the beginner could submit his manuscripts and look for advice. It would be pleasant to record that his efforts saved Irish literature. Unfortunately its state now is worse than it was then. But though O'Faolain published little else of his own during those years, he did produce piecemeal in his articles and editorials the fullest analytic description of contemporary Ireland, and of its strengths, faults, and derivations, ever given. More than anything else these writings, close in manner and approach to the best eighteenth-century pamphleteering, justify his title as first Irish man of letters. They are all forceful, witty, and thoroughly informed. Reading them, however, one can understand why the leaders of Irish life never felt any need for a man of letters in the first place. At least, not this kind.

Whether or not his American readers ever see this side of his work, and it is most unlikely that they should, it has a direct influence on what they do see. He is fond of quoting Newman's "It is the whole man that moves." O'Faolain moves with sureness because he has worked out and defined the understanding of Ireland to which his romanticism first impelled him. What makes humane sense in the quiet Irish chaos is an aid to perception anywhere — for proof see his Italian travel books, where the poor of Naples are the Cork poor of his own boyhood, and his excitement over E.C.A.-financed redistribution of land in the latifundia is both heightened and tempered by recollection of the Irish land wars. Also this search for understanding explains the outward peculiarity of his bibliography, for it has repeatedly driven him aside from what might seem the normal line of his development. Between 1933 and 1940 he published three novels, three various valuable failures. They fail, that is, as novels; as Irish literature, as examples of how some aspects of Irish life can properly be handled, they are first-rate. After each novel he wrote a biography. Two have been published here, *King of the Beggars* (1938) and *The Great O'Neill* (1942), the lives of Daniel O'Connell, who

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created the modern Irish democracy in the nineteenth century and won Catholic emancipation, and of Red Hugh O'Neill, native leader in the Elizabethan wars, who was at once the last Gaelic king and the first modern Irishman. The biographies are attempts to discover through history some answer to the problems that had foiled him in the novels. In one aspect they are successive backward projections of ascertainable continuity with the hope of calculating the present hidden directions of Irish life, assuming that these do not just go round and round. Otherwise they are a means of seeing just how a great figure does establish himself within the Irish limits and break through them.

He did not find the answer to his problems as a novelist because his chief dilemma was half his own. He was not satisfied with either of the two obvious solutions to conflict in an Irish novel, frustration or the emigrant ship. His first novel had evaded the issue by ending with the outbreak of the Revolution, but that was only an evasion because he knew when he wrote the book that the Revolution had not produced the answer. His two later novels end upon compacted frustration. Reading the third, *Come Back to Erin*, one has the feeling that after laying down his pen O'Faolain began kicking the manuscript around the room. He had sent his main character abroad to learn about life as it is lived outside the parish, and had then brought him back only to find that in the parish there was no possible role for a man no longer parochial. In other words, as a novelist he was beaten not by lack of talent — he has always had talent to spare and fling away — but by his too great demand upon a society intimate, homely, compact, and too rigidly narrow.

That brings us to his short stories. His collected stories have just been published, twenty-seven of them; and for the first time the whole of his personality is represented in one book. So are many aspects of modern Ireland, hitherto unsung, for in the short stories he has freer and wider range than he could ever achieve in the novel. A novelist is always somewhat limited by representative society — what cannot be presented as representative must be explained, and explanation, if it be the least taste sociological, always injures art. In wider societies this is not so much of a problem: nearly anything goes because nearly everything does. In Ireland, since independence was won, the aristocratic big houses have gone or have become irrelevant and the traditional peasant life, always the Irish artist's deepest resource, has all but withered away, so that the representative range is now bounded by the small farmer and the strong farmer and, in the cities, by the lower middle-class and the middle middle-class. There are many exceptions, to be sure, but all are individual, none typical. In the short story the writer is under no such limitation. The focus is almost always on character, any character in any context. As his collected stories show, O'Faolain has taken freest choice of both.

In his later stories he has chosen themes that would never have occurred to his youth. He is no longer distracted by Ireland. In his middle years his motto was "See the facts and understand the picture." Having seen and understood, he now favors a maxim from Baudelaire, from the realism of that great romantic: "Every man who does not accept the conditions of life sells his soul." And he would add: every woman and every nation and every writer. So he writes now with much more of easy verve and play of humor, and with sharper judgment than ever upon all that, in the name of romance or purity or safety, refuses life and the responsibility of living and loving. This judgment emerges most surprisingly in his stories about women — surprising because so stunningly unsentimental. He likes women; he is one of the few Irish writers who really do; but he insists on regarding them as people and therefore as responsible. Hence his stories "Teresa" and "A Letter," about two lovely girls, two lovely evaders of life, either of whom, though for very different reasons, could do with a swift kick. Or there is the sweet old Irish mother in "Childybawn," Mother Machree incarnate, a honeymouthed old bat with saw teeth. Or, on the other side of the ledger, the little girl in "The Trout" who discovers the sweet taste of courage, or the wife in "The Fur Coat" who realizes with a shock that her youth is gone when, after years of privation too busy for discontent, she finds that she has lost the ability to spend a bit of money on herself.

Yet now, as at the beginning, his work yields into another dimension that cannot be measured or be dealt with by firm acceptance — his sense of the ineffable hidden heart that is the source of all Irish loyalty and romance. Two stories can give the direction: the very early "Fugue," whose theme is the young rebel hunted on the hills in every generation, and "The Silence of the Valley," which circles continually closer to a single tremendous event, the death of an old cobbler in a mountain valley in West Cork. In that story everything is presented and nothing is explained. One does not explain the recognition of wonder.

When O'Faolain was twelve, and as yet an unalloyed romantic, he was plagiarizing so successfully from Robert Louis Stevenson that several of his tales were printed in the *Cork Examiner*. A career of graceful triumph was before him. But a year later he went one night to the theater to see the Abbey players in Lady Gregory's *Jackdaw*. There he saw something that shocked him. On the stage was a table, and on the table was a red and white checked tablecloth exactly like the one in the kitchen at home; and in a flash of wonder he realized that you could write about the life that merely lay around you. After that nothing came easy.

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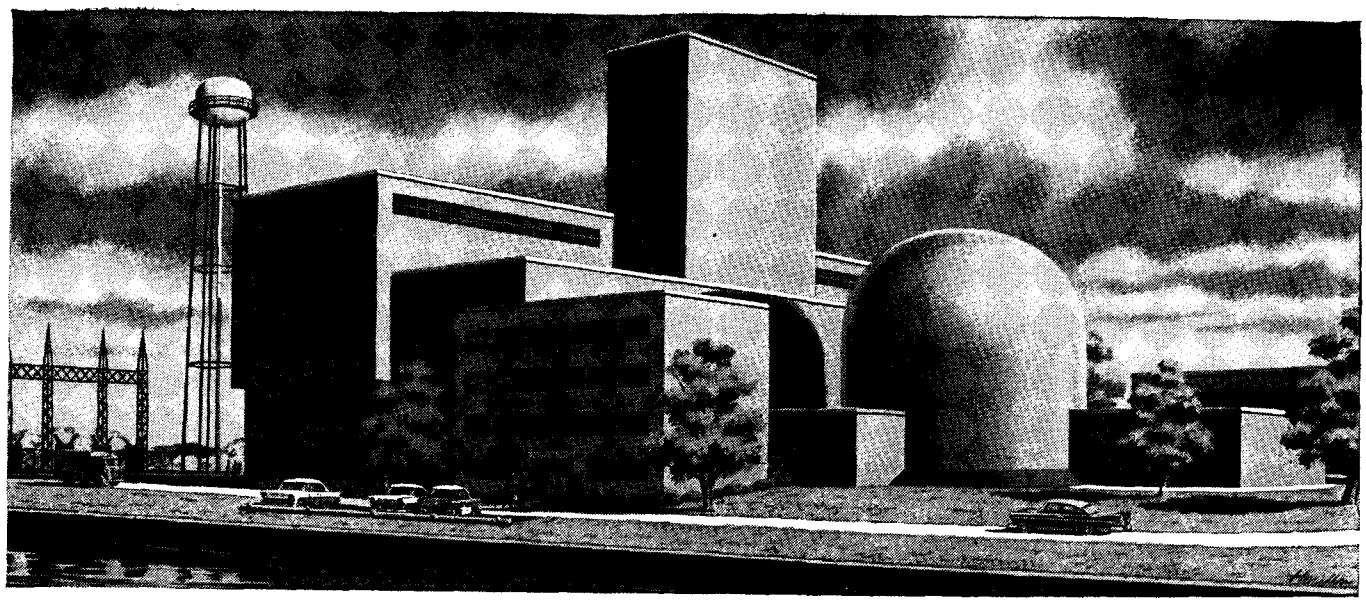
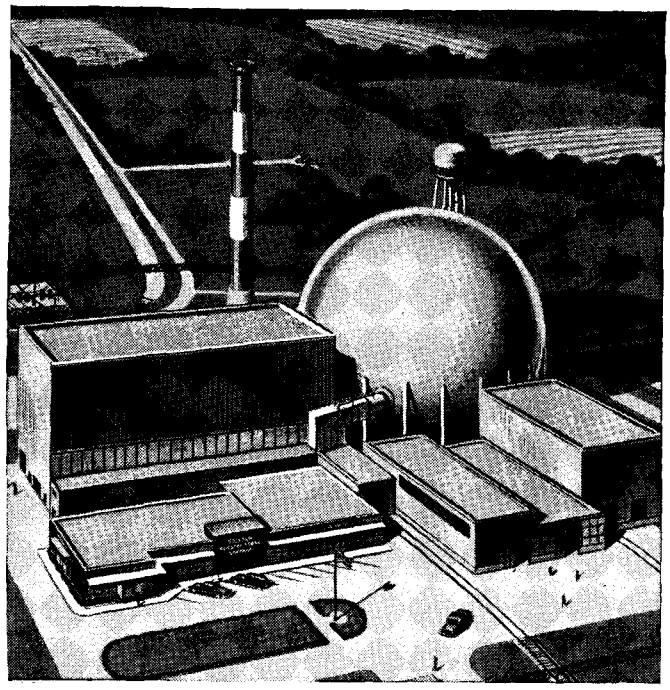
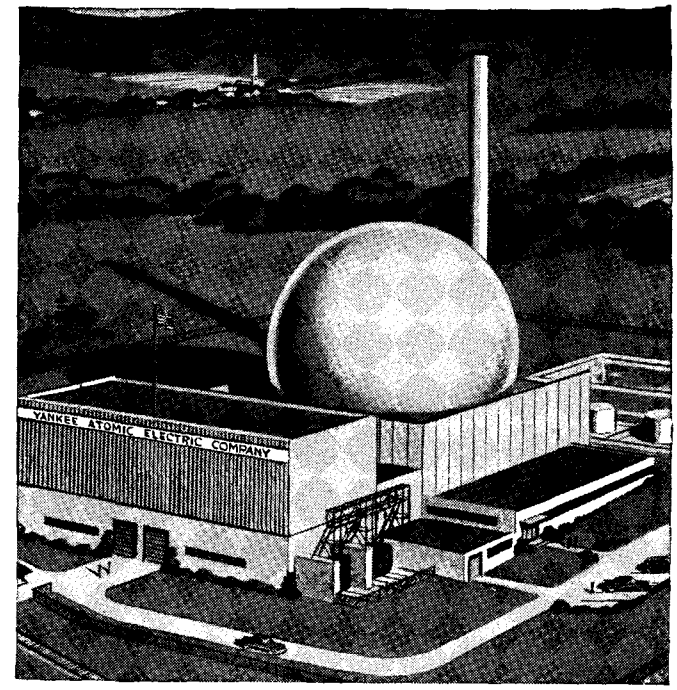


Enrico Fermi atomic power plant *is under way near Detroit through the joint efforts of 18 electric companies. A group of equipment manufacturers and the Atomic Energy Commission are also associated in the project.*



Dresden, Illinois, plant *is being developed by 7 electric light and power companies, their equipment manufacturers, and with the co-operation of the AEC.*



Yankee atomic-electric plant *is being developed by 12 New England electric companies. A number of equipment manufacturers and the AEC are participating.*

What will atomic-electric power plants look like?

Among the atomic-electric power plants now under way, three will look like the drawings above when completed.

Although they appear somewhat alike, each involves different methods, different materials, a different type of atomic reactor or "furnace." That's because the electric companies, the equipment manufacturers and the U. S. Atomic Energy Commission—who are all participating in atomic development—are searching for the best ways to produce electricity, using atomic energy as fuel.

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Books and Men

Born and educated in California, MARGARET NICHOLSON *was formerly Head of the Publishing Department at Oxford University Press, and in this capacity she worked with authors and editors in the revision and final editing of manuscripts accepted for publication. She is the author of* Oxford Author's Style Book *and* A Manual of Copyright Practice, *and her new book,* A Dictionary of American-English Usage, *based on Fowler's famous guide, has just been published by Oxford University Press. Miss Nicholson is at the present time Head of the Contract and Copyright Department of The Macmillan Company.*

WHAT IS GOOD ENGLISH?

by MARGARET NICHOLSON

1

SOME thirty years ago a professor of English at the University of California introduced his students to Fowler's *Dictionary of Modern English Usage.* That was in 1926 or 1927. I wish I could remember which, because it would be interesting to know that, without the fanfare of today's publicity, a scholarly reference book published in England could have found immediate enthusiasts in California that first spring of its publication. But I can't remember. Nor can I remember, I am ashamed to say, which of my English professors made the introduction. I do know that he spent the full hour that day reading snatches from it, and that I, for one, was an immediate convert. I stopped in at Sather Gate Book Shop that noon and bought a copy, and from that day on "MEU" has been my delight and mentor.

I never in those days felt that Fowler was particularly British or difficult. During the three years I taught high-school English MEU was always on the classroom reference shelf and to the best of my memory it was used, even by suburban California teen-agers of the "roaring twenties." I can't remember any complaints about its being un-American.

It wasn't till several years later, after I had abandoned teaching and was working at the Oxford University Press in New York, that I became aware of the battle between American-English and English-English. Oxford was militantly British at the time and the staff was virtuously conscious of representing one of the last outposts of British civilization. We addressed letters to our authors "John Doe Esq." — *Mr.* was allowed only for printers, paper men, and unpaid accounts. Posted above each desk was a list of English spellings to be rigorously adhered to in all correspondence: *analyse* with an *s*, *judgement* with an *e*, *pyjamas* with a *y* — though in what context *pyjamas* would appear in our daily correspondence I can't imagine. It became almost natural for me to speak of my *holiday*, rather than my vacation; *in the circumstances* (not *under* — though I should have remembered Fowler's remarks on that bit of foolishness), of course, I should need new *luggage*. I even remember once saying unblushingly that I should leave *Wednesday fortnight*. If my friends suspected me of snobbism (which they probably in their ignorance called snobbishness) it is hardly surprising. Today it all seems like a foreshadowing of "U. and Non-U." under the guise of "Brit. and Non-Brit.":

Brit.	*Non-Brit.* (or "*chiefly U.S.*")
tin	can
biscuit	cracker
chemist	druggist
packet	package or pack
ill	sick
shop	store
braces	suspenders
I fancy	I think (or worse, *I guess*)
increase (of wages)	rise (in salary) or lamentably, a *raise*
lodger	roomer
sweets	candy

And so on. Fortunately, before very long Oxford New York changed its policy. American spelling became the standard, our mimeographed lists were tossed into the basket, I graduated (a good Americanism) into editorial work, and the war of Brit. and Non-Brit. was forgotten. *Modern English Usage* remained on my desk, an indispensable help in editing both English and American manuscripts. But it was then that I began wondering about the possibility of a slightly simplified Fowler with American variations. Some fifteen years later, to my delight and apprehension, I was invited to undertake the task of preparing one.

Of course there is an English idiom and an American idiom, but in scholarly or serious speech

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and writing, as opposed to informal talk and fiction, the difference is not as evident as many of us believe. In books that do not contain dialogue, and that have not been deliberately edited for the American reader, our first clue that the writer is British is the spelling; in speeches that seem typically British, it is chiefly the accent that gives this impression; read in the newspaper there is often little that would not be the natural expression of any literate American. I consciously watched for expressions and constructions that one could label peculiarly English or peculiarly American in all my reading during the five years or so that I was working on the "American Fowler" and found many times that I could read chapters in succession without finding any example that could be cited as one or the other without qualification.

The other day I decided to make a random test of my theory in a book I was reading for pleasure (and what a pleasure it is to be able to give one's whole mind to the meaning rather than reserving at least half of it for spotting idiomatic usage and construction!). I found nothing in the first hundred pages, and rather desperately stopped on page 108 when I came to "Here we are back *full circle* to theories long familiar to philosophers." There is nothing in that that an American could not have written, but I suspected that "full circle" so used would come perhaps more natural to an Englishman. But very soon after that I found "A novelist who disregards major public events is either *a footler* or a plain idiot." A footler? If I had not consciously been watching for Briticisms I should have passed this over without noticing, but having stopped I realized I had no reliable idea of what a footler is; I reached for my dictionaries. Both *Webster's Collegiate* and *The American College Dictionary* give *footle*, n., "twaddle, drivel," and label it slang, but whether British or American slang they do not say. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* gives *footle*, v., "to trifle, play the fool," and n., "twaddle, folly" — also both slang. I am no authority on slang, so I gave up, but my feeling is that as current slang *footler* is chiefly Brit., not U.S. Then I found a term that I felt would justify me in stamping the writer British (if I had not already known he was): "Civilization can lift itself up by its *boot-tags*." *Boot-straps* is the American for that; no American would write *boot-tags* unless he was deliberately affecting familiarity with British idiom. Our man is English. I wish I had closed the book before I read the last sentence on the same page: "An electoral system *gerrymandered* in the interest of the moneyed class." Gerrymandered? What is our man now?

To be fair, I must admit that as I read on into the more specific chapters of the book I came across many individual words and phrases that would identify it as English rather than American: *motor-cars*, *tinned food*, *the greengrocer*, "old maids biking to Holy Communion through the mists of the Autumn morning," "posh tailor-made clothes." (*Webster's Collegiate* doesn't even list *posh; The Concise Oxford* defines it "smart, tip-top," and labels it slang. What about *tip-top?*)

2

And what about the reverse of the picture? What is it that tells the English reader "this book was written by an American"? First, of course, as with us, the spelling. We wantonly omit hyphens when they are needed and insert them when they are unnecessary; we use *z* when *s* is called for and discard the *u* in *-our* endings; we do not realize (or realise) that *worshiped* and *kidnaped*, without doubling the penultimate consonants, are not only wrong but invite flagrant mispronunciation. So let us forget the spelling. Wanting to have something more than a theoretical opinion, I asked some English friends how they identified a nonfiction book as American. "By its illiteracies," one of them retorted immediately. And what are the peculiarly American illiteracies? I insisted. Although it is rather unfair, since this was an informal, off-the-record conversation, I am going to give his list in the order in which it was presented.

Improper use of *will* for *shall*, first person future. This delighted me. It is true that the distinction between *will* and *shall* is less and less observed in America, even by good speakers and writers. Those of us who were brought up on traditional English still observe it instinctively; we are a minority. But is *will* for *shall* in this usage peculiarly American and indisputably an illiteracy? Sir Ernest Gowers, in his *ABC of Plain Words*, published in England for English writers in 1951, does not agree. He points out that "I will go" has always been the plain future for the Celts, that Americans have followed their practice, and that "the English have taken to imitating the Americans." "If we go by practice rather than precept," he continues, "we can no longer say dogmatically that 'I will go' for the plain future is wrong." Fowler would not like this. In his article on *will* (MEU) he says: "Of the English of the English *shall & will* are the shibboleth . . . and endow his speech with a delicate precision that could not be attained without it." Opposite views by two men to the manner born. Americans may choose whichever they will.

In back of for *behind*. "All Americans say it," according to my friends. Well, a great many Americans do. Certainly it slips easily from the tongue of many who should know better. I do not remember having come across it in print, and I cannot believe that a serious writer would be guilty of it. I agree that it is an illiteracy. Of *back of* for *behind* (the *in* is completely otiose) Fowler says gently, "An American, not an English idiom."

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The omission of the preposition in such phrases as "I'll see you Tuesday," "He works nights," "I'll write you as soon as I know." These are all standard American usage now; the Englishman, however, would say *on Tuesday, at night,* and *to you.* In recording *write you* when there is no direct object, *The Oxford English Dictionary* says, "freq. c.1790 — c.1865" and gives several examples.

He aimed to (*be*) rather than *at* (*being*). Whatever the purists may say, this is now standard American usage, although it is no longer condoned in England. OED lists it as obsolete, *Webster's Collegiate* without qualification, and ACD as "U.S.," contrasting it with the English *at* plus the gerund.

Different than instead of *different from.* How long this battle has been going on! It was in full swing in my own schooldays, and quite recently when I was discussing Americanisms with a college professor she exclaimed in horror, "I hope you're not going to allow *different than!*" Allow it? We have it, whether we like it or not. Again I turn for comfort to OED: "The usual construction is now with *from*. . . . The construction with *than* is found in Fuller, Addison, Steele, DeFoe, Richardson, Goldsmith, Miss Burney, Coleridge, Southey, De Quincey, Carlyle, Thackeray, Newman, Trench, and Dasent, among others" — the others, I am afraid, including two thirds of the American public.

So much for peculiarly American illiteracies. We have them, yes. But I was happy that my friend selected the examples he did.

Apart from so-called illiteracies, there are some words that have different meanings on the two sides of the Atlantic. For example, *faculty* is used on the *campuses* (so used only in America) of both English and American colleges, but as applied to the whole body of teachers and perhaps administrative officers (*A faculty meeting was called for Wednesday night*) it is "U.S. only." *Sabbatical* is used in England in its religious sense but not for an academic *sabbatical leave. The Humane Society* in England rescues the drowning and has nothing to do with the prevention of cruelty to animals.

Differences of this kind can be misleading, and it is well not to have too sanguine an acceptance of dictionary definitions. Even in the most recent edition of *The Concise Oxford Dictionary,* which helpfully uses an asterisk to indicate words and meanings "chiefly or originally American," one discovers some surprising things. "*Faucet* (chiefly U.S.), tap for a barrel." "*Filibuster* . . . *obstructionist in legislative assembly." "*Barn-dance* (orig. U.S.), dance in which partners advance side by side & then dance a schottische step." "*Bat,* v. (U.S. & dial.), to wink (*never batted an eyelid = did not sleep a wink*)." "*Beauty Parlour* (orig. U.S.), establishment in which the art or trade of face massage, face lifting, applying cosmetics, &c. is carried on." A *bouncer,* U.S. slang, is a *chucker out. Call down,* U.S. colloq., means *challenge.*

There are of course many words that we — and the British — now use without being conscious of the fact that they are Americanisms: a *blanket* ruling, a blood *donor,* the Red Cross *drive,* to be *through* one's work, to *grill* the prisoner, to meet the *deadline.* Most of these were at one time slang or colloquial, but are now standard, at least in informal use.

Understandably it is in slang and colloquialisms that the differences between British and American are greatest and most apparent. Even in one country there is difference in regional, occupational, and social slang. If slang has color, if it expresses some idea or feeling with an economy not found in standard English, it may pass its own boundaries and even become part of the permanent language. No one thinks now of *mob, bus,* or *cab* as slang. It is my belief that *gangster, hold-up,* and *hoodlum* are also in the language to stay (although it is regrettable that they reflect so unsavory an element of American life). The R.A.F. *gremlins* are as much at home in the United States as they are in England and may live to rival pixies and elves. Americans *grouse* (British slang) about their troubles and the British have little sympathy with *grouches* (U.S. slang).

Fowler says, speak as your neighbor speaks. True, the advice comes from his article on pronunciation, but it is as applicable to the use of English-English and American-English idiom. Personally I am unable to go the whole way and concede that if a large enough number of my neighbors say or write a thing in a given way, that way is right — or at least not until enough time has elapsed to give its blessing to the usage in question. To me *adviser* is so spelled, no matter how many times I see *advisor* in print, even in scholarly books. I prefer *John's going to Boston amazed me* to *John going to Boston* . . . even though I am assured that the gerund in America is dead. Speak as your neighbor speaks — but today our neighbor is the English-speaking world. If we have an idea to give to our neighbor, whether it is a commercial product or a global (U.S. vogue word) philosophy, we are inefficient if we allow disputed constructions or local peculiarities in our language to distract his attention. English-English and American-English are coming closer together, not growing farther apart. Two world wars, our publications, motion pictures, radio, television, and even the UN are seeing to that.

My feeling is that good English is good English, whatever the nationality of the writer. In every community there are local meanings, terms, and constructions, arising from the circumstances and environment of that particular locality. Some of these should be treasured, some should be eschewed in formal speech and writing. There is no essentially American-English or English-English. There are only not-too-important regional variations.

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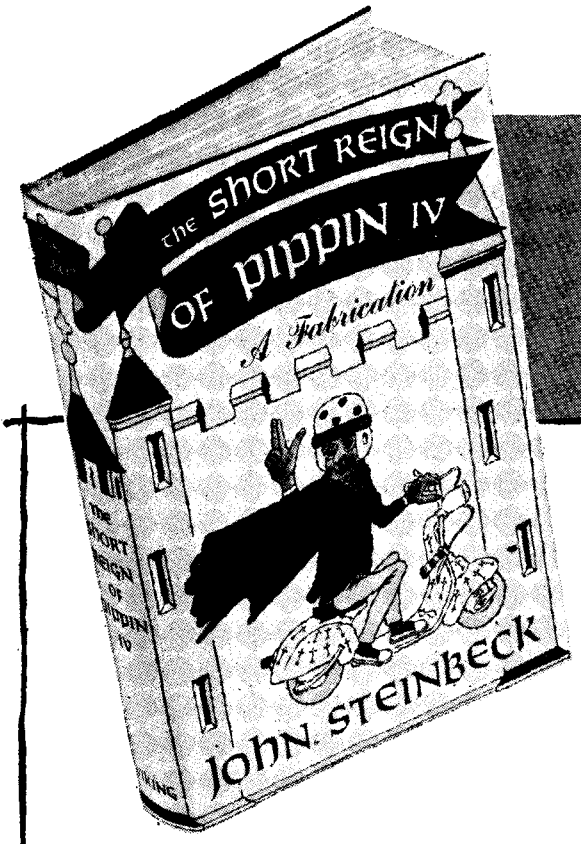

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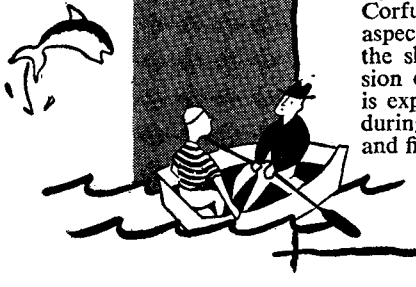

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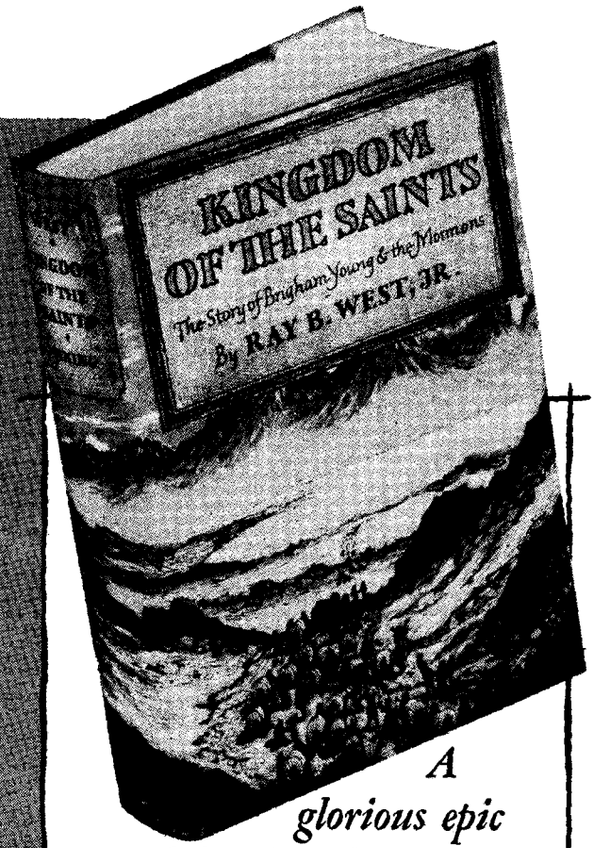

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THE *Peripatetic Reviewer*

BY

EDWARD WEEKS

THE first and only time that I went fishing with my father was up the Metedeconk Creek the summer of 1911. He came down for the weekends that summer at Bay Head; and what with his tennis, bathing, and whist-and-Welsh-rabbit parties, he had little time for my younger brother, Rufus, and myself. But I must have sprung the trap when I reported at Sunday dinner that Carroll Dunn had caught a two-pound black bass up the creek.

"What did he use for bait?" asked Dad.

"Shiners," I said. "Carroll said the bass were breaking water all over the place. He'd have caught a pailful if he could have stayed till dark."

"That's just what the three of us will do next Saturday," Dad decided with that confident gesture of his right hand. "Make camp up there and then fish until dark and before sunrise. We'll bring you back the best mess you ever tasted," he said to Mother.

At first it sounded incredible. Dad was not the most patient of men, and when he did things with us, like the trip to Coney Island, he got exasperated fairly soon. But this time anticipation fixed everything. Our cousins, the Brewsters, agreed to sail us and our rowboat to the mouth of the creek — a distance of six miles — and to come for us after church on Sunday morning. Rufe and I sandpapered the rust off our steel rods; we questioned Carroll closely and repeatedly; and Friday night, when Dad returned, the equipment for the expedition was complete: the blankets, the bucket of shiners, frying pan, eggs and bacon, sandwiches and doughnuts, sugar and coffee, and an extra lure, for in New York Dad had purchased two dozen hellgrammites, angry-looking nippers which he said the bass would go crazy for.

"And don't forget the citronella, Ned," Mother reminded. "Put the bottle in your pocket so it won't smell up the food."

Saturday was one of those days, soft west wind, not a cloud. Sid Brewster sailed us across the Bay, the rowboat slapping along behind, and he anchored in the creek while we ferried things ashore and chose our camp site under the pines. The marsh smelled strong and the little pockets of the narrowing, twisting creek looked dark and promising.

"Well, good luck!" Sid called as he pointed for home. "See you in the morning. Perhaps I won't have to go to church."

Dad said it was too early to begin, so we built the fireplace, collected the wood, and tested our blankets on the pine cones, removing the hard objects beneath. We ate our sandwiches, Dad had his bottle of beer, and at last, just as the sun was sinking, we embarked, Rufe in the bow, with a shiner on his hook, Dad in the middle, and I in the stern with a hellgrammite on mine. Dad said twenty-five cents for the biggest fish, and another quarter for the most.

The pickerel, small and slimy, responded at once to Rufus, big sunnies, too; but my hellgrammite just kept roving around. Dad took the rod and said he felt something and for God's sake stop rocking the boat! Rufe and I were slapping the mosquitoes which were hovering close to our bare legs, and each time we did the boat would make rings. Dad said to use the citronella and then we discovered that he had forgotten to bring it.

We tried likely spots, we trolled and in the gathering dark we heard the fish splash, but never a bass came our way. Dad said it was time we got some sleep and the morning was the best anyway, so we rowed back. Rufus said he'd caught the most and I was too disgruntled to argue. The wind had dropped, and even as we peeled off our socks and sneakers we heard them coming, the whiny hum of Jersey marsh mosquitoes. Swarms of them. It was too hot to hide under the blanket. Dad said, "Try spreading newspaper over your face," but then, when you slapped, it made your ears ring. This went on until Dad said, "Oh the hell with it, we'd better row home."

He was a big man, but six miles is a long row in the dark with three people and all that gear. When Dad's blisters came and I took an oar, he kept pulling me around. A slow, curving, grinding progress.

Half past two when we reached the yacht club and with the rods, the frying pan, the uneaten eggs and bacon, the blankets, and the rest, started our weary walk toward the sleeping village. On East Street, Rufe lagged behind.

"What are you crying for?" demanded Dad.

"This bucket is so heavy," said Rufe.

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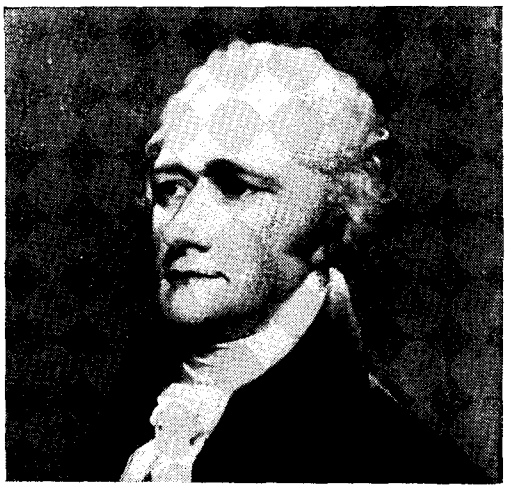

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"Hell's bells! Dump it!" roared Dad, which was why the Verplanks found shiners in their geranium border on Sunday.

We reached the cottage and dropping all that gear on the porch must have awakened Mother, for she called out, "Ned, is that you?" To which he replied, "Yes, dear. Who else were you expecting?" That remark never struck me as funny, then or later when it was repeated. The whole thing was a flop.

The three hats

For those of us who were coming of age in the 1920s, **S. J. Perelman's** prose holds all the sentimentality of a wistful little bunch of violets. His loves were our loves, and today he can make us laugh aloud at their absurdity. In ***The Road to Miltown*** (Simon & Schuster, $3.50) Mr. Perelman wears a number of different hats. Under one hat he is the possessor of the zaniest Hollywood vocabulary I have ever read, and in a series of sketches entitled "Cloudland Revisited," a playback of the great silent films, he takes the stuffing out of Cecil B. De Mille, canonizes Erich von Stroheim ("the Man You Love to Hate"), and revivifies Sam Goldwyn's *Stella Dallas* in phrases which even Sam would never have thought of. There are ten of these playbacks, and if the films move you to tears today, it will be tears of laughter. I caution you, however, not to take them in sequence, but at intervals as the *New Yorker* has done, lest the routine become too noticeable.

Under another hat Mr. Perelman talks like an English traveler fresh home from Mandalay — with all the swagger and absurdity of a Pukka Sahib; this gives him the chance to make fun of Somerset Maugham, Christopher Morley, and others who have affected the cheerio manner, and he makes the most of it.

Under a third hat he is himself, fighting a losing battle with insurance agents ("Come On In, the Liability's Fine" is one of the gems of this collection); going on a cruise to Catalina with Georgie Jessel; or joining an improbable committee dedicated to saving the Aragon on Washington Square. Each of these sketches is plotted with a nicety.

"Albemarle" Cushing

Before he became the beau ideal of the quiz shows, tall **Charles Van Doren** had collaborated with his friend **Ralph J. Roske** in the writing of ***Lincoln's Commando*** (Harper, $5.00), the biography of Commander W. B. Cushing, U.S.N., the most audacious naval officer in the Civil War. Will Cushing spent his boyhood in Fredonia, New York; one of a large family, he inherited from his father a vulnerability to colds and migraine. He grew to be a wiry six-footer, with the brightest of eyes, irrepressible spirits, and the will to dare anything. Like Nelson he was coolest under fire, with that confident resourcefulness which is the essence of leadership.

During his years at Annapolis he was always on the danger line of demerits, and as a First Classman his impudence and hot temper led to his dismissal in March, 1861. He pled with Gideon Welles for reinstatement, and the Secretary of the Navy, after reading him the riot act, assigned him as a master's mate on blockading duty off the Virginia Capes. His first experiences as a commando on the Cape Fear River steeled him for his great exploit on the Roanoke where, with a launch and cutter and a handful of picked men, he penetrated eight miles upstream to destroy the Confederate ram *Albemarle* with a giant torpedo which he had to trigger by hand. How he escaped with his life is a miracle, but he did. No honors were too good for him, and he became even more of a hero in the amphibious attack on Fort Fisher.

The authors are at their vivid best depicting Cushing's exploits, a little less successful in the account of his home life and adolescence, in which his letters are quoted at too great length. Sad is the anticlimax of his life when, the war over and heroism fading, he no longer felt the urgency to dare.

How a novelist begins

It does not seem possible that thirty years have passed since I made my first train trip to Toronto, there to present the *Atlantic* check of $10,000 to **Mazo de la Roche** for her prize-winning novel, *Jalna*. But today there are fourteen Whiteoak novels in print and in many translations, and the manuscript of the fifteenth is all but complete. In addition I recall *Growth of a Man*, that robust novel of the Canadian woods which she wrote when she was trying to close her mind against the Whiteoaks; then the plays, the collections of short stories, the briefer books reflecting her love for England, and the adventures with her famous little Scotty, and now, freshly minted, her autobiography, ***Ringing the Changes*** (Atlantic–Little, Brown, $6.00).

Very clearly it was Mazo's exposure to such an extraordinary number of ruddy, strong-willed, idiosyncratic elders which prompted her to write about family life. As an only daughter, the last of her line, she began inventing a play in which all the characters were males and only two of them were children; with it she peopled the big Victorian rooms of her childhood, and at the urging of her cousin and lifelong companion, Caroline Clement, she continued to amplify this secret world until, under the spurs of grief and need — grief for her father and need for money — she felt compelled to write. In *Ringing the Changes* we meet the living prototypes of the Whiteoaks, and what rich and varied folk they are! We see the nervous anguish and self-doubt which assailed Miss de la Roche as she struggled to lift her writing beyond the personal confines of her experience, and we appreciate the growth and fulfillment which she found in England and in her maturity at home.

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BOOKS *The Editors Like*

Fiction

THE MIDWIFE OF PONT CLERY *by Flora Sandstrom.* (John Day, $3.50.) The French tradition of sexual horseplay in the provinces and the English tradition of genteel romance in the shires are fused with improbable success in this featherweight novel.

CLAUDINE AT SCHOOL *by Colette.* (Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, $3.50.) An early work but already showing the vitality and acute insight typical of Colette. It's a pity that the English translator has found no better solution for slang and dialect than the obvious Britishisms employed here.

THE HOUR AFTER WESTERLY *by Robert M. Coates.* (Harcourt, Brace, $3.50.) Mr. Coates writes with dour humor and invariable understatement, qualities which make his occasional skids into fantasy all the more persuasive. These short stories are held together by a point of view which may be described as resignedly apprehensive.

The Age of Reason

THE FIRST FOUR GEORGES *by J. H. Plumb.* (Macmillan, $4.50.) The private characters and public actions of the Hanoverian kings are described with remarkable thoroughness in less than 200 pages, and the Georges prove to be much less dull than tradition has labeled them.

ROGUES, ROYALTY, AND REPORTERS *by William Bragg Ewald, Jr.* (Houghton Mifflin, $6.00.) Items from eighteenth-century English newspapers, including political controversy, domestic rows, terrifying medical advertisements, scandal, crime, and, once in a while, plain news. Revealing and amusing stuff.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON IN THE AMERICAN TRADITION *by Louis M. Hacker.* (McGraw-Hill, $4.75.) Concentrating on Hamilton as a thinker, the author gives a lucid account of his development as a politician and economic theorist, and of his influence during his own time and since.

Ancient Worlds

THE BIRDS *by Aristophanes;* AN ENGLISH VERSION BY DUDLEY FITTS. (Harcourt, Brace, $4.00.) Another of Mr. Fitts's brilliant, free-wheeling translations from the Greek comic playwright. One of the many delightful things about these pun-packed, quotation-crammed versions of classic plays is their unmistakable playability.

THE WORLD OF THE INCA *by Bertrand Flornoy.* (Vanguard, $4.50.) After describing the conquest of Peru, Mr. Flornoy works back, via many documents and some conjecture, to a reconstruction of the fallen empire, an unusual and rewarding approach.

BYZANTIUM: GREATNESS AND DECLINE *by Charles Diehl.* (Rutgers University Press, $8.50.) The first volume of the projected Rutgers University Byzantine series is less a formal history than an extended interpretative essay analyzing the characteristics of the Byzantine Empire, balancing its strengths and weaknesses and summarizing its achievements.

THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS *by John M. Allegro.* (Criterion, $4.00.) One of the specialists busy deciphering the scrolls describes the process and the nature and origins of the texts. He also records the involved chicanery stirred up by their discovery; the tale reads like an Ambler thriller.

Reader's Choice

BY

CHARLES J. ROLO

The Town (Random House, $3.95) by **William Faulkner** is the second installment of a trilogy devoted to the rise of the reptilian Snopes clan in Faulkner's mythical Yoknapatawpha county. Its predecessor, *The Hamlet*, described the arrival of the Snopeses in Frenchman's Bend, a rural settlement near Jefferson, and their demoralization of the district. At the opening of the present novel (some years before the First World War), Flem Snopes, in whom the family's "long tradition of slow and invincible rapacity" has reached its fullest flowering, has moved in on Jefferson. The crucial elements in the Snopeses' past are somewhat cryptically recapitulated, and those who have not read *The Hamlet* may sometimes find it hard to keep their bearings. Otherwise, *The Town* is one of Faulkner's most accessible novels. By which I mean that its quota of characteristic obscurities is only moderately annoying and not — as in *A Fable*, for instance — intolerably oppressive.

Three narrators (all of whom appear in other books of Faulkner's, as do most of the other characters) take turns at addressing the reader. One is the garrulous lawyer-philosopher, Gavin Stevens, graduate of Harvard and Heidelberg, an old-fashioned champion of decency and honor, who represents the conscience of Jefferson. A second is Stevens' nephew, Charles Mallison, not born at the novel's opening, who is telling what he learned of the Snopes saga in his boyhood. The third is the former sewing-machine salesman, V. K. Ratliff, a shrewd, likable commentator, whose humorous folk idiom pitches his version of the events in the comic key.

From this three-cornered perspective, the novel — episodic in structure, like *The Hamlet* — recounts the maneuvers by which Flem Snopes, in the course of two decades, crawls onward and upward to a dominant position in Jefferson. His wife's lover, Mayor de Spain, creates for him the office of power-plant superintendent, and he puts into operation a devious scheme for stealing the brass fittings of the power plant. On this occasion his skulduggery does not pay off. But when de Spain succeeds Colonel Sartoris as president of the bank, Flem (who has tricked or forced his hostile father-in-law into voting his stock for de Spain) is quietly slipped in as vice president. And eventually — by

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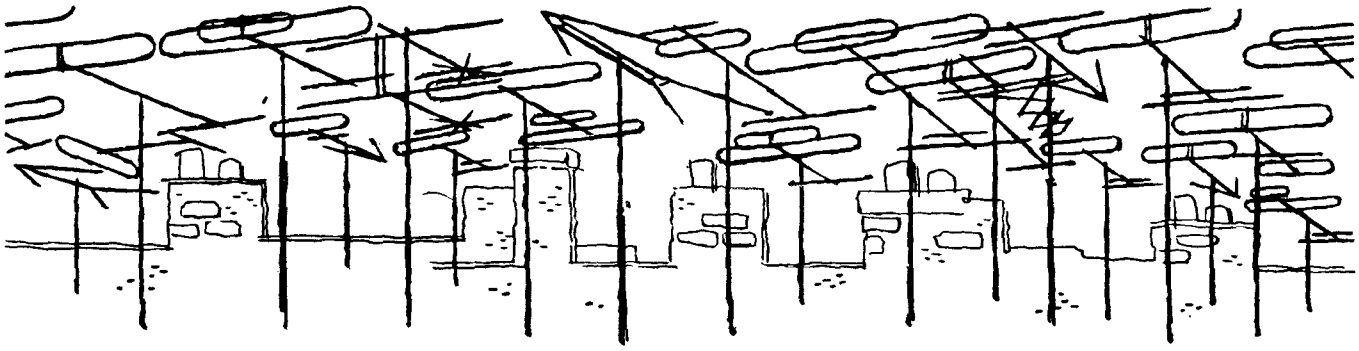

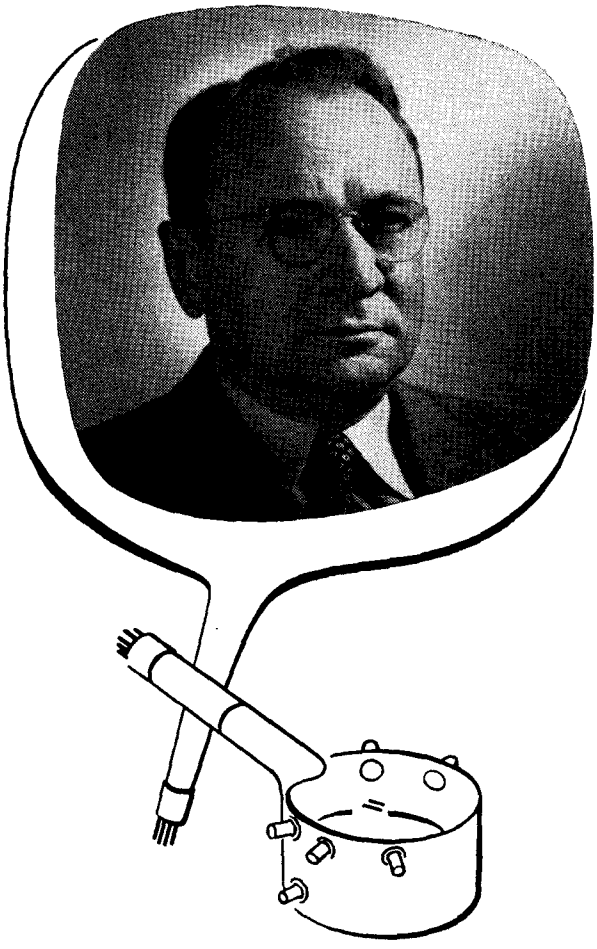

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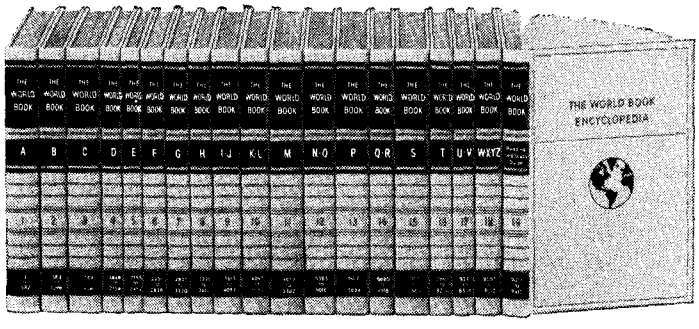

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means of an intricate and infinitely base scheme of blackmail — Flem takes the bank presidency from de Spain, gets him forced out of town, and becomes the owner of his stately mansion.

There emerges from the novel, rather more clearly than in much of Faulkner's work, a theme that is central to his moral vision. Flem Snopes is the symbol of what Faulkner finds most detestable in the modern world. His dehumanized rapacity is worse than plain meanness and more dangerous than the lust for money and power, for it also includes the lust for respectability. A Gavin Stevens (and what he stands for) cannot stop Flem. When Stevens catches Flem treacherously engineering the eviction from Jefferson of two of his (Snopes's) scandalous kinsmen, he has no choice but silent complicity; for Stevens' code demands that he save Jefferson's good name from being soiled by the Snopeses. But Flem has his profound weakness: like that other memorable Faulknerian symbol of evil, Popeye, he is sexually impotent. And Gavin's success in rescuing from Flem his wife's illegitimate child, who has grown into an enchanting young girl, appears to symbolize that some part of the future can be saved from the evil that Flem represents.

An American Odyssey

One Life (Simon & Schuster, $5.00) — the life is that of Wendell Willkie — is a poet's boldly imaginative excursion into the realm of biography. **Muriel Rukeyser** describes her book as "a story and a song." It combines the methods of biography and drama with numerous passages of poetry, and with documentary techniques similar to those used in the "Camera Eye" and "Newsreel" sections of Dos Passos' *U.S.A.*

Miss Rukeyser sees Willkie as a representative figure, "brought up in the tradition we know — a double tradition, full of opposites." Son of a schoolmaster turned lawyer, Willkie spent his childhood amid the excitement and fierce turmoil of a boom town. When the tin workers went on strike and the company called in strikebreakers, Willkie's father — called "Hellfire" — defended the union. Chosen to deliver the class oration at his graduation from law school, Wendell created a scandal; "most radical speech I ever heard," said one of the authorities. But presently Willkie was a young execu-

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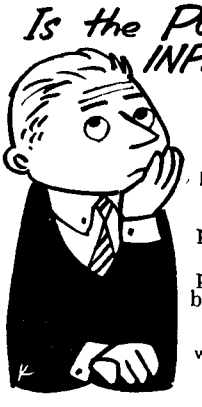

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tive, relentlessly fighting the TVA, affirming that "money is power," and becoming a hero to executives; then a corporation president, an all-out slugger for the utilities, a supersalesman of private enterprise; and suddenly a political candidate, campaigning for the highest office and becoming "unreal to himself." And now, after defeat and recoil, he made "the imaginative leap . . . the other movement — toward the world, around the world, into the world." What he did, after returning from his global trip, says Miss Rukeyser, "was to give the folks back home the sensation of reality."

Miss Rukeyser has, in effect, presented Willkie's life as a contemporary Odyssey in which the protagonist is an American Everyman who eventually grows to heroic stature. The new biographical form she has created — its effects recall those ancient forms, the epic and the ballad — is well suited to her purpose. It eloquently dramatizes what is characteristically American in her subject's experience and brings into poetic relief the universal values which are at stake.

But Miss Rukeyser's approach, applied to a controversial figure such as Willkie, has serious liabilities. The emotional key in which her story-song is pitched — though it does not prevent her from showing Willkie's shortcomings — does preclude a cool and searching analysis of them. It is disconcerting to find the trip to Russia, on which Willkie was so monumentally hoodwinked by Stalin, described in glowing accents. The presentation of Willkie's oneworldism is consistently and exaltedly rhapsodic, though the record suggests — even to one who admired Willkie for making a timely and courageous contribution to internationalism — that in his utterances on global affairs there was not a little foolishness and irresponsibility.

In sum, Miss Rukeyser has been carried away by fuzzy thinking and idealization. Her book must be taken as a celebration of a man's conversion to what Miss Rukeyser believes to be the Light. And as such *One Life* belongs, for better and for worse, in the upper echelons of inspirational literature.

Books and men

Background with Chorus (Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, $3.75) by **Frank Swinnerton** is a ramble down

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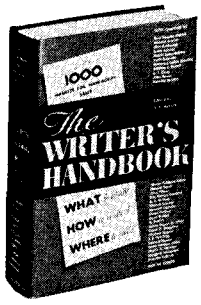

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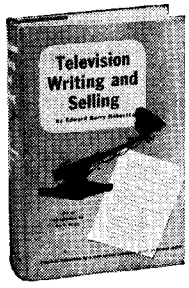

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memory lane, the lane in question being literary England in the first seventeen years of the century. This is a scene which has been revisited in so many memoirs that it is a triumph on Mr. Swinnerton's part to have come up with a book so well stocked and so delightful.

Swinnerton, who began his varied literary career as a publisher's office boy in 1901, is a modest and good-tempered observer, endowed with freshness of perception, discernment, and a gift for felicitous phrasing. His book contains intimate, tangy pages or paragraphs about most of the leading writers of the period and others who made their names later. Among them are Meredith, Hardy, Chesterton, Belloc, Bennett, Wells, Shaw, Henry James ("a mystic dealing tortuously, not with the divine, but with the mundane"), Conrad ("His readiness to take offense was beyond that of even English-born authors"), Walpole, Galsworthy, Compton Mackenzie, D. H. Lawrence, and Katherine Mansfield ("She said, almost from between closed lips: 'One doesn't know whether to have dozens of children, or devote oneself altogether to art.' I forget what I advised in this curious dilemma").

Mr. Swinnerton's fund of anecdotage is capital stuff. He draws fascinating sketches of tastemakers, forgotten now, but once prominent or notorious — adventurous editors, great publishers, flamboyant literary journalists. Above all, he projects with zest the wonderfully spirited atmosphere that permeated the English world of letters.

In his youth, Swinnerton recalls, periodicals "dealing with new books as if new books were important . . . were very nearly innumerable." The prestige, social and otherwise, of authorship was immensely greater than it is nowadays; and critics and reviewers were then more powerful, more ferocious, decidedly less scrupulous and considerably more entertaining. The heinous practice of multiple reviewing (made possible by the anonymity of most critical columns) was far from uncommon. Andrew Lang wrote no fewer than twenty notices puffing a romance of his friend, Rider Haggard; Conan Doyle discovered that the six reviews which described his cherished comedy, *A Duet*, as immoral were all the product of the same hand. The literary world was, in effect, a battleground. Plots were hatched, feuds flourished, and critics were sometimes physically assaulted by authors they had flayed. But the ties of friendship, too, between writers and between bookmen were more widespread and stronger than they are today.

In some respects the literary world is a better place now, and in some respects a worse one; what is certain is that it is less lively and less passionate. A memoir like Swinnerton's brings home to us how much of the excitement generated by books, how much of the importance attached to letters, has been drained off by the cinema, the radio, television, and social change.

Fiction chronicle

Brian Moore lends support to a theory of mine — based on Oscar Wilde, G.B.S., Joyce, Sean O'Casey, Frank O'Connor, the iconoclastic Samuel Beckett, and several other Irish expatriates — that the surest way of becoming a good writer is to be born in Ireland and in due course to leave it. (Excellent writers have stayed in Ireland — Yeats, Synge, O'Faolain, for example — but they are decidedly outnumbered by the talented exiles.) Mr. Moore (currently a resident of Montreal), who wrote that remarkable first novel, *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne*, has now passed the hurdle of the second novel without a stumble. His title, ***The Feast of Lupercal*** (Atlantic–Little, Brown, $3.75), is taken from the ancient Roman festival in which expiatory rites were followed by the invocation of fertility; and it has ironic overtones. For it is sterility — the sterility, as Moore sees it, of life in Ireland — which is the theme of his beautifully realized story.

Diarmuid Devine, a teacher in a Catholic boys' school in Belfast, is a shy and shabby bachelor in his late thirties, pathetically inhibited with women. He is secretly yearning to find a nice, encouraging girl when he meets Una Clarke, the pretty niece of a colleague. Her eagerness to join his theatrical group brings them together and he falls in love with her. But not believing that she can see anything in him except a helpful drama coach, he takes her warmth and spontaneity toward him as tormenting proof of the rumor that she (a Protestant) is a "fast" girl, whose parents have sent her away from Dublin because of an affair with a married man. His emotional astigmatism and the malicious gossip aroused

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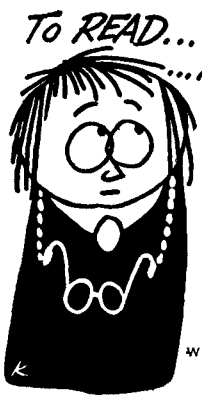

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by their meetings lead him into a series of mistakes which end in tragic frustration.

The word "compassion" — as Edmund Fuller points out in a brilliant article in the *American Scholar* — has of late been glibly misapplied to novels which sentimentalize and glorify incorrigibly antisocial and criminal types, while treating normal citizens with positive vindictiveness. What makes Mr. Moore's portrayal of Diarmuid Devine moving is genuine compassion (the feeling of another's plight and pain as if it were one's own, the sharing of all human guilt) for a decent but inadequate man, so much a prisoner of his guilt-ridden fears that he cannot recognize integrity and accept the love he so desperately needs. There is just this to add: the secondary characters are admirably drawn; the handling of scene and incident is convincing throughout; and the comic elements in the novel are skillfully made to heighten its poignancy.

The Seraglio (Knopf, $3.95), a first novel by **James Merrill,** is also (at least in part) the story of an inadequate man, damaged by his background, who retreats from love and sex. In this instance, the background is one of supercolossal wealth and picturesque indulgence of the libido. The twenty-five-year-old narrator, Francis Tanning, is the youngest child of an aged American tycoon, supposedly an invalid but still vigorous enough to continue in his lifelong role of amorous potentate, surrounded by women — ex-wives, mistresses, near-mistresses, friends, a nurse, a visiting European sculptress. The principal setting is the old multimillionaire's Long Island mansion, and there are scenes in New York, Rome, and Jamaica.

Mr. Merrill's narrator is an ineffectual, aimless sort of rebel against his background, especially against his relatives' unquestioning respect for the accumulation of more money. Francis' attempt to come to terms with life is the central theme of the story, and the author's handling of it seemed to me faltering and unsatisfactory. Where, however, he shows considerable talent is in his ironic, subtly nuanced, and highly individual depiction of an extravagant world seldom treated in serious American fiction.

James Merrill has shown, entertainingly and with authority, what F. Scott Fitzgerald meant when he

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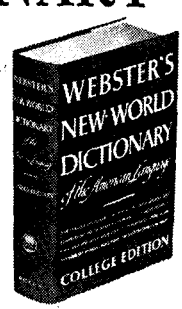

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said to Hemingway: "The very rich are different from you and me."

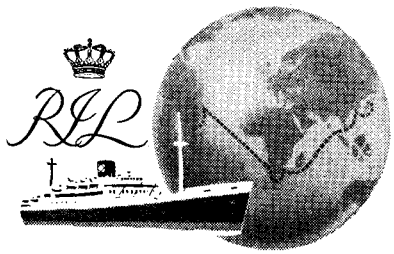
In his third novel, ***The Homecoming Game*** (Simon & Schuster, $3.50), **Howard Nemerov** has dramatized with feeling, humor, and precision the dilemma of a man of principle fortuitously caught up in a shoddy conflict with sinister ramifications. Charles Osman — associate professor of history in a good, smallish, coeducational college — has given a failing grade to the star of the football team, who will thereby be prevented, by the college rules, from playing in the season's most important game. Osman suddenly finds himself pressured to change the grade from a variety of sources, among them his respected friend, the college president, and two powerful alumni of the Neanderthal stripe. When the issue has reached grotesque proportions, the football star further complicates the moral conflict in which Osman is involved by revealing startling reasons for *not* wishing to appear in the game.

The Homecoming Game is ingeniously plotted, and the ideas at work are tellingly expressed through the characterizations in an ironic key. Some implausible notes are struck, but the book has wit, dash, and point.

Geoffrey Cotterell is a young novelist whom English critics have compared to Thackeray, Arnold Bennett, and Somerset Maugham. His *Strait and Narrow* was a Book Society choice; his *Westward the Sun* a selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club. What disappointed me about his new novel, ***The Strange Enchantment*** (Lippincott, $4.95), is that Mr. Cotterell seems to have settled cozily into the groove of the expert craftsman, the popular novelist of high competence who works from the conventional blueprints for the "well-made" novel. His book is certainly a skillful piece of storytelling, but I had hoped, perhaps mistakenly, for something more, for signs of the artist's hand — some freshness of perception, some originality of vision.

The Strange Enchantment, which opens in an English seaside town in 1898, centers on the life of Isabel Rowland, who at a very early age wins local fame as a prodigy at the piano. The death of her father leaves the family with insufficient income for Isabel to complete her musical studies — her brother has to be trained for a profession — and her prospects of a great career are shattered. She mar-

"THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE ROUTE"



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ries a naval officer, who is killed in the First World War. Her second husband, a German who takes her to live in Berlin, turns out to be an adventurer who married her for her few hundred pounds, which represented a fortune in inflation-ridden Germany. Isabel's misfortunes mount to a tragic climax, and on the very last page an explanation is produced for the pattern of her life — we are told that she was one of those people who unconsciously court disaster and take pride in being unhappy. The trouble is that this insight has not been persuasively built into the fabric of the novel. In fact, so far from suggesting that masochism has brought upon Isabel her persistent bad luck, Mr. Cotterell at times gives the impression that it is he, the author, who is sadistically stacking the cards against his heroine.

The Black Obelisk (Harcourt, Brace, $4.50) by **Erich Maria Remarque** is also a novel in which competence is all. Mr. Remarque has returned to his youthful experiences in Germany after the First World War. The setting is a provincial town, and the young hero, Ludwig Bodmer, is — as Remarque was — a former schoolteacher employed as a tombstone salesman; an amateur poet, and a part-time organist in an insane asylum.

The story, which carries him through the fantastic year of runaway inflation, 1923, is filled with bizarre happenings and robust comedy; and it is on the whole an engrossing affair. But it is unnecessarily long — repetitiousness sets in after the halfway mark — and the vision behind it is essentially sentimental and superficial. The philosophizing which Remarque puts into his characters' dialogue is stereotyped stuff — the kind of mildly cynical knowingness which impresses sophomores as sophisticated insight.

What William Faulkner mercilessly said of an earlier novel of Remarque's — that it was probably created "to sell among the heathen like colored glass" — has its application to *The Black Obelisk*. It might be defined as colored glass of the very best quality.

Poets, painters, and places

"I have endeavoured," says **Gilbert Highet** in his Introduction to ***Poets in a Landscape*** (Knopf, $6.50), "to recall some of the greatest Roman poets by describing the places where they lived, re-creating their

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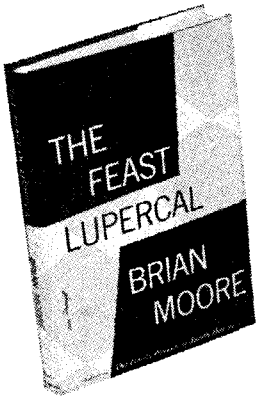

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characters and evoking the essence of their work. This book is meant for those who love Italy, and for those who love poetry." Mr. Highet, who among other things is Anthon Professor of Latin at Columbia University, has produced, to borrow a word from the hucksters, an unusual and attractive "package," in which one finds biographical portraits of seven poets (Catullus, Vergil, Propertius, Horace, Tibullus, Ovid, and Juvenal); accounts of two great love affairs (those of Catullus and Clodia, Propertius and Cynthia) which have been immortalized in verse; a travelogue through Roman Italy illustrated with forty-eight photographs taken by the author; and what amounts to an anthology of Latin poetry, translated by Highet as nearly as possible in the exact meter of the original.

Professor Highet is a scholar of vast learning in whom the gifts of a good pedagogue are reinforced by those of a professional entertainer: a born storyteller, he makes whatever he touches engrossing. The pedagogue in him has a tendency, which I find jarring, to indulge in moralizing of the order of "Ovid is wicked"; and the entertainer sometimes plays down to his audience. But the operative point is that in *Poets in a Landscape* he has produced a book which is both scholarly and inviting. The biographies are crisp and rich in human interest, the critical discussion is lucid and illuminating, the evocation of place sharp and suggestive.

Men and Monuments (Harper, $5.00) brings together five distinguished pieces, all of them connected with art, which **Janet Flanner,** the *New Yorker's* Paris correspondent since 1925, wrote for that magazine. Three are profiles of the old masters of contemporary painting — Braque, Matisse, and Picasso. One is a profile of André Malraux — novelist, soldier, adventurer, politician, and philosopher of art — who has been aptly described as "a man restricted to the heights of experience." The fifth item is a fascinating account of the looting of art by the Nazis in the occupied countries, and of the restoration of this property — "several hundred thousand items" — to its rightful owners by the twenty-five-man SHAEF group known as Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives. Miss Flanner's book is further proof that, in the field of magazine reportage and comment on the cultural scene, she has exceedingly few peers.

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ACCENT ON LIVING

ONE way of enjoying mystery stories is to give them a rather shallow reading, maintaining the while a state of complete belief. This enables the reader to throw in with the various characters and to join their doings without too exacting a requirement that it must all make sense.

It does not make sense, for instance, for Miss Maud Silver to be instructing Detective Inspector Frank Abbott in the most elementary reasoning, time and again. Miss Silver is a private eye, and Abbott is the pride of Scotland Yard, yet unless he asks her a series of stupid questions, in the role of straight man, and stupidly refuses to accept her point of view, even though her successes in countless previous cases are legendary, Miss Silver will not have a chance to do her stuff. No stuff, no book. One hint from Miss Silver ought to be enough for Abbott, but no, he must argue, or forget, or misconstrue, and behave, for all his elegant tailoring and aristocratic connections, like a clodhopping constable instead of the C.I.D.'s top hand.

For anyone but a mystery-story reader, incongruities of this sort would damage a book's credibility, but the suspension of unbelief is a faculty that must account for more human activities than most of us would care to admit. It is certainly what keeps many a fiction writer in clover. A reader can amaze himself at how scanty the fruits become when he reads intently and keeps anything like a standard of reality in his reactions. Much of the scheme in the average mystery story is achieved by techniques of repetition and delay, and little else.

Let the story begin, then, with a leisurely view of rich, capricious, disagreeable old Desmond Doakes and his household. Rich enough to make it worth while, mean enough to deserve it, Doakes makes good on the two main credentials which every character about to be murdered must present. Eight or ten relatives and servants are enough for a useful corps of suspects, and the first seventy-five pages will account for where these people are and what they are doing at the time of the crime. A certain amount of bait is planted throughout this section, but since the experienced reader knows that there is no way of distinguishing between bait and mere descriptive detail, this can all be forgotten just as quickly as the pages are turned.

Once Desmond has been duly done in, the local police sergeant appears and spends fifty pages in taking down the statement of each member of the household. If the statements seem to be running too thin, or too simple to fill that much space, the sergeant, ostensibly in the hope of tripping up or breaking down a character, will lead the character through the story once again. At this point the sergeant — and the author — decides to call in the Yard.

Far from opening a new field of activity, the Scotland Yard man puts the same material through the same old meat grinder that the sergeant has been cranking. "What's all this about, Sergeant?" he demands briskly. "Brief me on it." The sergeant tells him all about it, and so does everyone else.

Once again we read where everyone

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was and what they were doing. This brings us to about page 150. Enters now the gifted amateur or the private eye. "Let me brief you on what we have so far," says the Scotland Yard man.

As if these major repetitions were not enough, some authors will repeat any small development. For almost two pages in *The Fingerprint*, for instance, the murdered man's lawyer and Detective Inspector Abbott engage in telephone conversation. Miss Silver is in the room with Abbott. "The line was very clear and good," the author tells us. "Miss Silver was able to hear every word."

Yet at the end of the conversation Frank Abbott hangs up the phone and repeats to Miss Silver what the lawyer said. "Yes," replies Miss Silver, "I was able to hear most of what was said."

When one considers that the main device for carrying along all the repetition is simply the withholding of a few facts that will identify the criminal, and that everything else falls quickly into place as soon as the author releases them, a real question arises as to why these stories are ever read by anyone. And after much pondering, I suggest that the answer lies in the reader's vicarious enjoyment of the food and drink consumed by the characters.

Miss Silver's adventures have little to do with food, but they do include an occasional village pub and a fair amount of tea. There is usually a breakfast or two, also, that sounds good — a sideboard well stocked with covered dishes, Georgian silver, and that sort of thing. We have all enjoyed Nero Wolfe's exquisite menus, even at the risk of envisioning ourselves as becoming equal to Wolfe in obesity. A more recent British writer, Ian Fleming, causes his secret service agent, in other respects a kind of British Mike Hammer, to take almost all his meals at real and extremely expensive restaurants in London, New York, Florida, and on the Riviera, and sometimes the hero uses up a page or more just to make his selections from a menu. Inspector Maigret seems to be spending more and more time in cafés, drinking beer or an interesting local wine and letting the case come to him, so to speak, while the sea breezes cool and protect him from the heat of the Mediterranean outside. If this is too slow for some readers, they can always sit down again with Philip Marlowe and toss off a few shots of the hard stuff from that pint bottle in his desk drawer. Marlowe wears very well over the years, doubtless because he sticks mostly to good rye or bourbon.

CHARLES W. MORTON

COUPON CLIPPER

by JEAN TIGAR

JEAN TIGAR *lives with her family in Schenectady, New York. She was formerly engaged in editorial work, and her writing has appeared in many magazines.*

I GUESS it's a mistake for a woman to leave her mail around where others can see it. Especially if the others include her children and they have a tendency to be made sleepless by good news. The children's father would come under the heading of "others," of course. But he is older and he can take exciting news in stride. That's what the letter I left around had in it: exciting news. Not that it got exciting right off the bat though. It was from a soap company, and the soap companies, I have found, usually break things to you pretty gently.

The letter started out by saying, "Here is the 10¢ HOORAY LIQUID coupon which, in answer to our ad, you asked Noted Television Personality to send you. Also a handy wall can-holder for you that exactly fits a can of HOORAY LIQUID which you just can't beat for washing dishes. And keeping HOORAY handy like that will be a terrific help in licking that daily dishwashing job of yours."

It was only in the *second* paragraph they said, "Your name is now automatically entered without further action on your part in the HOORAY LIQUID drawing. This means your name may be picked as one of the winners of the new Dodge Lancer V-8's."

There was also a P.S. that said I'd find enclosed in the envelope an order

blank for nylon stockings on which I could save as much as $2.95 if I wished three pairs. But this was an anticlimax compared with the news about the Dodge Lancer V-8, of course. I think it's ridiculous of the soap people not to realize this too. Who is going to be piker enough to care about saving a measly $2.95 when she can get a Dodge Lancer V-8 for nothing?

It was different in the old days. In the old days, if you wanted a Dodge Coronet Lancer V-8 for nothing, you had to go to the bother of sending in box tops and writing twenty-five words or less that were judged for sincerity, aptness, originality, clearness, neatness, and heaven knows what all. Not that that kind of thing isn't going on still. Only the other day, I saw an ad for a box-top-and-statement contest offering a cabin cruiser and a small private ocean to sail it on as a first prize, and describing how easy it is to win. I have no quarrel with that kind of stuff either. It's all right for any girl who feels her brains need exercise. But I do say manufacturers are going to create ill will if they don't hurry and devise some method of helping the consumer's children adjust to the newer way. Hardly a day goes by here that the children do not need guidance.

Yesterday, for instance, I came across the tickets my husband and I got a couple of weeks ago when we attended the movies. Each ticket entitles the holder to a chance to win a 21-inch color television set in a solid mahogany, hand-carved cabinet. The lucky number will be drawn on the stage of the theatre next Saturday, thanks to the combined generosity of the theatre, Sam's Clothing Store,

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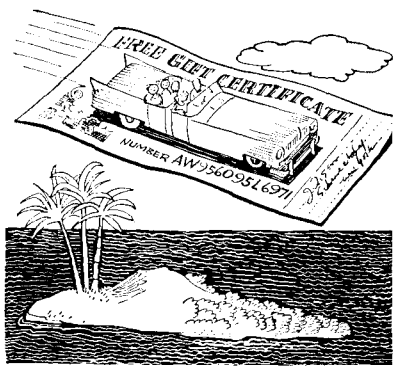
Eddie's Flower Shop, and Salvatore's Pizza Palace. Since the children attend the movies every Saturday anyway, and since you have to be present to win, I said each could take a ticket. But they got into a wrangle over whose choice it would be to select the very first program they were going to watch on the *old* set, which they took it for granted would be given them to put upstairs when we had to make room for the solid mahogany hand-carved color TV set in the living room. If my husband hadn't come along just then and announced that he had decided to have our old set sent down to the office, I don't know how I'd have handled it.

I have wondered many times lately what I'd be doing if we were still in our other house, where the kitchen didn't have divided drawers. Our divided drawers here are stuffed with



different kinds of coupons redeemable for valuable premiums, several types of merchandise certificates that save you money, books of different-colored stamps for valuable gifts at different markets, and so on.

There's the book in which to put the yellow Gold Bond Dividend stamps; when full, it will entitle me to $2.50 worth of anything in the whole supermarket. And there are the green Coöperative Discount stamps from the dairy. After I paste thirty of these on each of forty pages, I can have the picnic basket we are saving for. These two books nestle next to the thick Family Discount Dividend folder, which has brown stamps worth one tenth of a mill each (that's what it says on the cover) and will get us a lawn ornament or a Scrabble game from our fishman.

I keep a rubber band around the small cardboard tickets that I get with every purchase at the bakery. It makes it easier to take them from the drawer that way and put them in my purse when I go to check each Saturday on whether or not the numbers posted on the bakery wall correspond to any on my tickets for the weekly toaster, the waffle iron, the blender, the frying pan, or the teakettle that I can have absolutely free.

The bakery is right across the street from a supermarket where I do not usually trade but where I've been stopping in for a few things lately every time I check on the toaster, the waffle iron, the blender, the frying pan, and the teakettle — because this super is offering a beautiful Chrysler Windsor 4-Door Sedan or a Chrysler Windsor Nassau Hardtop (you get your choice). It has extra equipment such as radio, heater, undercoat, service, two-tone paint, safety accessory group which includes back-up lights, luggage compartment light, glove box light, hand brake flasher, automatic rear dome light, and safety cushion dash panel, and it will be mine if one of the free tickets I fill out and drop in the box has the lucky number on it.

But nobody has come up with anything more thrilling for my money than the frozen food people. Practically every week I send my name and address on a special card to the frozen food packers by courtesy of my frozen food man. They are giving away absolutely free (in addition to hundreds of other valuable prizes, of course) a trip to Hawaii for two with all expenses paid and $500 spending money to boot.

The other day, one of the kids set me back on my heels about this, however. Each was trying to get me to say which one of them I'd take to Hawaii (my husband can't get away for a protracted period right now); and I was hemming and hawing when one of them inquired what I'd do if I won the trip to Hawaii *and* the trip to Havana which a famous canned meat concern is awarding at the same time. My husband saved the day here too. He just reminded the kids that we'll probably be taking a nice weekend trip in our Dodge Coronet Lancer V-8 or our Chrysler Windsor Nassau Hardtop or our Chrysler Windsor 4-Door Sedan then, and we just won't *care* about anything else.

•

SIGNS

by W. G. HITE

The seeds are sowed,
  The screens are hung —
The weeds, my back,
  And spring have sprung.

ALL MY OWN WORK

by ALEX ATKINSON

Alex Atkinson *lives in Surrey, has written several plays and three novels; his shorter work appears frequently in* Punch *and other periodicals.*

The fact that he works in a cutely ramshackle studio with one blonde dressed in eye shadow brewing his coffee on a spirit stove and another trying on two-piece bathing costumes behind a screen is not the only reason why I envy the man who makes a living out of joke drawings. There's a much stronger reason.

I'm not going to deny that my light pieces of a thousand words approx. would probably split more sides if I turned them out while sprawled on a day bed being fed grapes by the little number who poses for that desert-island joke we keep on not bothering to read the caption of. Under those conditions my works might be less frequent than they are at present, but by God they'd reflect a depth of experience.

You're not going to tell me that these cartoonists *don't* have a high old time of it, whooping it up night after night with apprentice cover-girls in leopard-skin trousers. I often picture them as I sit glum in my lonely room pretending to be suave and humorous. They smirk over their drawing boards in gaudy attics alive with the murmur of guitars, acknowledging the praise of visiting sculptors as they dash off another fakir on his bed of nails or add a few more doe-eyed charmers to that harem joke. In the shadows someone sings a flamenco afire with love and the burning south, or whatever it is they sing. Candles burn in Chianti bottles, and bearded abstractionists dose the punch with absinthe.

And here I am, with my fingers

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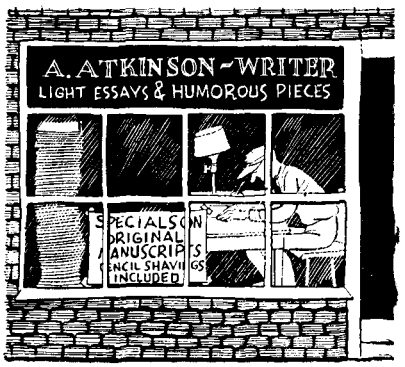
stained red and black from disentangling typewriter keys, and everything against me. Four walls and a table and a chair, and for all anyone cares I might just as well be prospecting for anthracite in the Belgian Congo. Do I hear the merry tramp of literary feet upon the stair? No, I don't. The satirists are all at home, as gloomy as



I am, each in his book-lined cell, and I don't want to see them anyway — coming in here expecting me to read their stuff and tell them that Benchley had better move over. And if you think those women novelists with a corner in cozy seduction are any kind of fun at a party, you'd better take off those purple-tinted spectacles. They sit around with big teeth and wrinkled stockings and they talk about food, just like anybody else.

Of course, I can see now that I doomed myself right at the very beginning, thinking I was smart at school because I only made one spelling mistake in my essay on Pet Mice, when if I'd had any sense I'd have been down there in the Art Room, dreaming up ways to shade a pyramid or put a bit of highlight on a jug. From there it would have been a short step to three years' intensive study in the cafés of the Left Bank, and at this very moment, instead of fumbling through a dusty thesaurus looking for words that keep falling off the tip of my tongue, I might be interviewing a couple of eager, succulent models, each vying with the other for the privilege of posing for my next sugar-daddy cartoon.

But, as I say, this is not the prime cause of my envy and spite. Life, I should hope, holds more pleasures than are to be attained by uninhibited romping on a gamboge-spattered studio divan. In the final analysis I am a serious artist, and so what really interests me more than anything else in the world is money. Therefore the main thing that gets me about these cartoonists is that having taken ten minutes off from bohemian revelry to illustrate in a few deft strokes a gag they overheard at a vodka-and-Camembert party the night before, and having made it big enough to fill a whole page in a magazine, and having received twice as much for it as I would have got for beating my brains out for three solid days stringing together eight hundred words to fill the same space, and having frittered away the money in low saloons in the company of women in dirndl skirts who make torsos out of bits of wire, they then have the brazen effrontery to sit back complacently and wait for somebody to want to *buy the original!*

Now I'd be the last person on earth to deny a magazine reader the pleasure of writing out a fat check so that he can frame some trumpery illustrated jest and hang it in his living room. If I work my imagination very hard I can even understand how he'd get a great kick out of being able to say to his friends: "Yes, I know you saw it in the paper, but if you study this original carefully you'll see all the places where he had to rub out — think of *that!*" But my point is this. I am in touch with quite a few people who scrape up some kind of living concocting those lumps of foolish prose which are spread on the pages of periodicals so that the cartoons will have something to be attractively embedded in, and not one of them has any evidence of a reader, throughout the whole tangled course of recorded history, having offered so much as the price of a cup of weak tea for an original manuscript. *That's* where the devilish injustice lies.

I myself (to name but one) must have at present, stored in some forgotten drawer or other, the rough drafts of upward of a hundred laughable essays which in their printed form have gladdened the hearts of men, and I find it hard to believe that there isn't someone, somewhere, who wouldn't mind having one framed on the wall of his study.

I'll go further. To prove my point I here and now offer to the highest bidder the original pencil manuscript of the valuable work you are now engaged in reading. Feverishly scrawled on nine lined pages each measuring eight inches by five, it would make an attractive decorative panel guaranteed not to clash with anybody's curtains. The savage crossings-out and the indecipherable insertions combine to give each page an interesting pattern — especially the first two, where I was still wondering what the hell to write about. As an added inducement, it happens that the reverse side of each page contains a stretch of dialogue from a heavy three-act drama I started to write last autumn during a spell of toothache.

Negotiable bonds will be accepted, but offers of food parcels, old clothes, or courses in journalism will be promptly returned. Some slight preference will naturally be given to any cartoonists who may apply, but apart from that the thing's wide open. Moreover, I don't want to hold a pistol to anybody's head, but if this stunt doesn't work I may seriously consider leaving the field of letters altogether, and laying in some India ink. I'm only warning you.

HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

(As Emily Dickinson might react to it)

by CAROL EARLE CHAPIN

Have dinosaurs come back again?
  Did you see them on my hill?
They chewed the treetops down to stump,
  Then turned indifferent heel.

Huge yellow monsters, hard of hide,
  With their prehensile mouths
Have unearthed earth, disordered it
  And unhomed every house.

Historic creatures are no more;
  I daresay these will pass:
Centuries hence, this scavenged place
  May spring again in grass!

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by JOHN M. CONLY

Anderson: The Music of Leroy Anderson (Frederick Fennell conducting Eastman-Rochester Pops Orchestra; Mercury MG-50130: 12″). This is the highest-fi Anderson on records, and happily it does not duplicate much of the content of the second highest-fi, which is the twelve-inch Decca collection with the composer conducting. Fennell seems a trifle taut, after Anderson, but he is good all the same, and so is his ensemble. A worthy rendition of music written purely for pleasure by an artist in whimsey. Main item is the *Irish Suite;* other numbers include *Serenata, Sleigh Ride,* and *Penny Whistle Song.*

Copland: *Appalachian Spring; Billy the Kid* Suite (Eugene Ormandy conducting Philadelphia Orchestra; Columbia ML-5157: 12″). Aaron Copland wrote two arrangements for full orchestra of his chamber-ballet score *Appalachian Spring.* One was condensed and one wasn't; this is the first recording of the long form, so to speak. The restored portions turn out not to be very important, but the Philadelphians have a marvelous time with the whole score, and so will any listener. It comes forth rich, crisp, and vivacious. Further, I am sure Ormandy reads it with scrupulous accuracy, as Koussevitzky did not in his vintage version (which still enthralls me, just the same). Ormandy's *Billy,* on the overside, is equally crisp and delicious.

Cowell: Set of Five with **Ives: Sonata No. 4 for Violin and Piano** and **Hovhaness: Kirghiz Suite** (Anahid and Maro Ajemian, violin and piano, with Elden Bailey, percussion; MGM E-3454: 12″). There is nothing dull on this disk, but the principal attraction is the fascinating five-part suite of Henry Cowell, a chameleon of a composer here undergoing a sort of Arabian Nights transformation: Mark Twain playing Haroun-el-Raschid. If I may, I will describe the result as profoundly amusing, and will warn you not to

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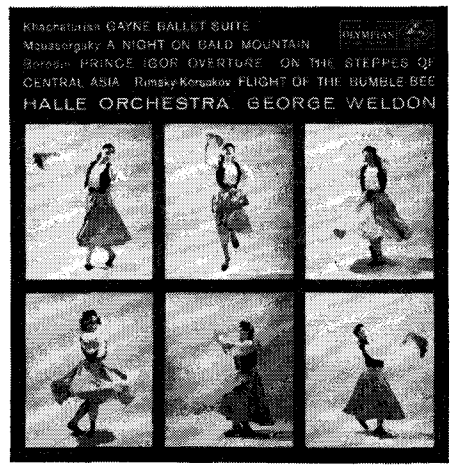

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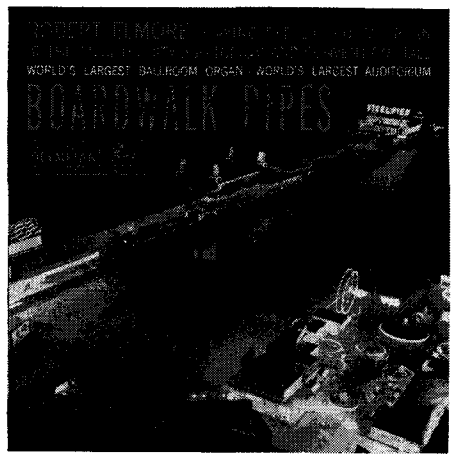

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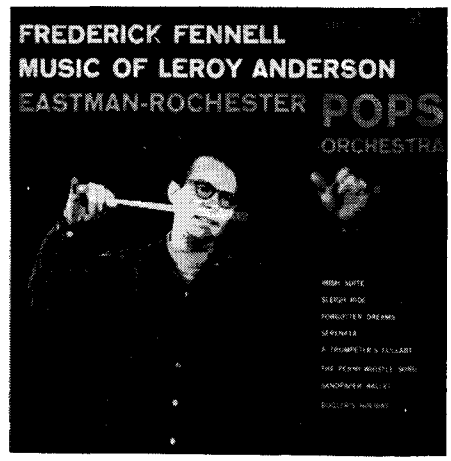

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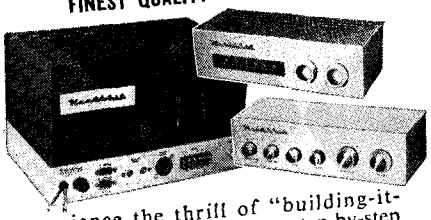

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miss it. The Hovhaness is clever and atmospheric. The Ives is the sonata subtitled "Children's Day at the Camp Meeting," and is not played by the Ajemian sisters with quite the delightful surety they bring to the other two works; maybe they were inhibited by reverence. The recording is clarity itself, a special asset in the Cowell suite, with its enchanting succession of percussive effects.

Hovhaness: *Saint Vartan* Symphony (Carlos Surinach conducting MGM Chamber Orchestra; MGM E-3453: 12″). Here is small but potent instrumental artillery depicting feats well suited to the mode of portrayal: the exploits of an Armenian warrior saint of the fifth century against the Zoroastrian Persian armies. The music really seems to be a very fierce and solemn ballet suite rather than a symphony, but it is none the less effective for that, nor for its being very up-to-date in instrumentation. There are a great many episodes, but you'll stay with them. (Vartan is killed, but wins.)

Mozart: Violin Concertos No. 4 and No. 5, "Turkish" (Wolfgang Schneiderhan, violin; Hans Rosbaud conducting Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra; Ferdinand Leitner conducting Vienna Symphony Orchestra; Decca DL-9857: 12″). As a pairing, particularly, this record stands up very well against formidable competition. Schneiderhan is better, and has a better orchestra, in the Fourth than in the Fifth Concerto. In both, however, there is a sort of winsomeness, an air of intimacy with the music and with the listener that makes for great charm. There is no display here, and the sound is comfortable rather than impressive, but the net result is a recording very easy to listen to again and again. One has the feeling that everyone concerned really loves Mozart.

Sibelius: Tone Poems (Sir Adrian Boult conducting Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra of London; Vanguard VRS-489, 490: two 12″). The tone poems here — subdivided into legends, sagas, patriotic and nature pieces — are *En Saga, The Swan of Tuonela, Lemminkainen's Homecoming, Pohjola's Daughter, The Bard, Finlandia,* Prelude to *The Tempest, Night Ride and Sunrise, Oceanides,* and *Tapiola.* Other works might have been included — *In Memoriam,* for instance, which is not yet on microgroove — but this is a good collection. Boult does not quite get the high color into Sibelius' music that Beecham does and Koussevitzky used to, but he gets as much as anyone else does, and I rather think Sibelius himself would like these performances, with their mannerly manliness. The orchestra is the London Philharmonic under a pseudonym; it knows Boult and knows its Sibelius. The recorded sound is nicely detailed and yet clean in the climaxes. I was especially taken with the music for Shakespeare's *Tempest,* which so far as I know here makes its debut on long-playing records.

Wagner: *Wesendonck Lieder;* Arias (Kirsten Flagstad, soprano; Hans Knappertsbusch conducting Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra; London LL-1533: 12″). The arias are *Elsa's Dream,* from *Lohengrin; Ich sah' das Kind,* from *Parsifal; Der Männer Sippe* and *Du bist der Lenz,* from *Die Walküre.* We should be grateful to Mme. Flagstad for having preserved this wonderful voice (informed with an equally wonderful musicianship) until modern recording techniques could capture it. To say it was as good as ever would be false, but not very. Only on big top tones must she force; for the rest, the richness and ease of production are just about what my memory tells me they used to be. And the dramatic expression is, if anything, better. If you are any kind of Wagnerian, you owe yourself this disk; it is unique.

Priestley, J. B.: *Delight* (J. B. Priestley reading thirteen of his own essays; Spoken Arts 716: 12″). Mr. Priestley admits, to begin with, that he has made a lifework of grumbling, which may have given people the wrong impression. He *does* enjoy life, and to prove how much he enjoys it he proceeds to discuss a variety of special delights. These include fountains, orchestras tuning up, conductors, smoking in a hot bath, wood, the mineral water in foreign hotel rooms, and not going places. Most touching is his description of what he calls "the delight that never was," which is a place to live — rather like an imagined ducal city of the 1830s, where everything is graceful, well-proportioned, easy-paced, full of the charm of smallness and intimacy. It is a rather melancholy little delight, but you won't forget it in a hurry. Mr. Priestley reads well, as a man trained in speaking but not ashamed to betray a little Yorkshire now and then. This is a really delightful record.

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Pleasures and Places

TOURIST IN HOLLAND

TOURISTS enamored of quaintness and traditionalism can, without trying too hard, leave Holland with the happy impression that the country looks just the way they had hoped it would look. The tulip fields in bloom (assuming it is spring); the 1700 windmills; the peasants in wooden clogs; the half-dozen villages where the old local costume is still worn; the sixteenth and seventeenth century houses with stepped gables; Amsterdam's network of elm-lined canals spanned by four hundred bridges — all this conforms pretty closely to the image of Holland created by Dutch painting and folklore and the admirable brochures of the Netherlands Tourist Association. You see meadows as painted by Hobbema against a Ruysdael sky; and interiors pleasantly reminiscent of those immortalized by Vermeer and Pieter de Hooch.

This tourist's-eye view of Holland is somewhat deceptive. My Dutch friends took pains to show me another aspect of their country — the huge constellation of brand-new apartment houses on the outskirts of Amsterdam; the streamlined commercial buildings in Rotterdam, in one of which automobiles can drive up a ramp to every floor; the gigantic electrical works of the Philips Company at Eindhoven. The truth is that the Dutch, while they unquestionably have deep and far-reaching attachment to tradition, are also a forward-looking people, in many ways more sympathetic to modernity than, say, the English or the French.

A stroller through the streets of any major Dutch town will come upon innumerable antique shops, but he will notice almost as many shops selling vacuum cleaners and electrical equipment. The Dutch telephone system, with its automatic dial for long-distance calls, is one of the most efficient in Europe.

Family life

The Italian, it has been said, is a man who lives in the streets and the Frenchman a man who lives in the café. The Dutchman, it might be said, lives in a cluttered parlor, surrounded by his family, which is usually a large one.

The abundance of children — and, too, the fact that the Dutch do not seem to require large doses of entertainment — means that the typical Dutch couple spends the greater part of its leisure in the home. "It is the Dutch," some humorist has observed, "who invented private life." (It's worth mentioning, parenthetically, that they also invented a game which has become one of the greatest disrupters of private life, namely *kolf*.)

My first impression, on arriving in

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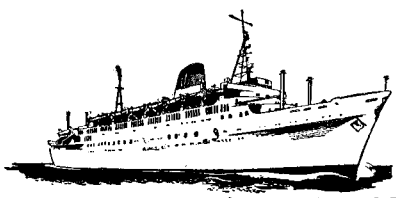

GREEK LINE

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Amsterdam, was that practically everyone owned a bicycle and carried a brief case — and I wasn't far wrong. More than half of the families in Holland do own bicycles. One sees aged nuns and tiny children riding them; and Fodor's guidebook, *Benelux*, which I found the most useful guide to Holland, reports that even blind men in the Netherlands get around on bicycles, led by their Seeing Eye dogs. As for brief cases — the professional classes carry them for the conventional reasons, and most working-class people use them as a container for their lunchtime sandwiches.

To tote a brief case is considered *deftig*, which is one of the Hollander's two favorite adjectives; the other is *gezellig*. The former connotes dignity, propriety, respectability; the latter connotes coziness, a decorous sort of fun.

Deftige gezelligheid

The cafeterias in Amsterdam have uniformed doormen, and even in second-class hotels breakfast is served by a waiter in white tie and tails. This is *deftig*. At a wedding banquet, I saw the father of the bride read a long, obviously carefully prepared oration. This was *deftig;* and judging from the occasional polite laughter it was also mildly *gezellig*. The general concern for propriety has caused Dutch life to be governed by rigid laws of etiquette. For example, the sales clerk in a shop, however busy, invariably sees a customer to the door before attending to the next one.

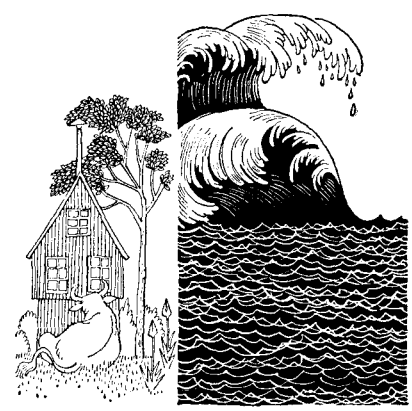
The Dutch pursuit of *deftige gezelligheid* appears to be eminently hygienic for both the body and the intellect. The Dutch have the world's longest life expectancy; and, per capita, they have won more Nobel prizes than any other nation.

The Dutch are so profoundly bourgeois and so deeply religious a people that manifestations of human frailty which would not stand out elsewhere strike the visitor as highly startling. In the Rembrandtsplein, in the heart of Amsterdam, there is a garish constellation of honky-tonks and girlie bars, where I saw couples embracing with an abandon which would not get by in Greenwich Village and where the strip tease is performed with no concessions to Calvinism. And no more than half a mile away from the Royal Palace in Amsterdam, on one bank of a stately canal, there is a street on which prostitutes solicit trade seated beside illuminated windows. It is as though one were to stumble upon a bawdy house in the annex to the vicarage.

Getting there

At the present rate of exchange — 3.80 gulden to the dollar — Holland is one of the cheaper countries in Europe for the American tourist. An admirable way of getting there cheaply — for those who have the time for sea travel — is via the *Maasdam* or the *Ryndam*, two up-to-date, 15,000-ton passenger liners almost exclusively given over to tourist class accommodations. The $190 (one-way) tourist class fare entitles a passenger to virtually run-of-the-ship privileges, which means that he is traveling about as well as via cabin class on most other liners. The demand for space on these ships is so great that it is necessary to make bookings many months in advance for a spring or summer departure. Direct air service to Amsterdam is provided by Pan American and by the Dutch airline, KLM. The round-trip fare from New York, in season, is $558 on the tourist flights, $756 first class. There is now also a 15-day excursion rate: $461.

From April through August, Holland is overrun with tourists. A visitor rash enough to arrive in Amsterdam or The Hague without a hotel reservation, as I did once, may find not only that all the hotels and pensions are full but that he has a hard



time obtaining a bed in one of the private homes which take in tourists. In luxury hotels, the rates run to around $5 for a single with bath and $8 to $10 for a double, breakfast included. The range in hostelries of the second rank is from $2.50 for a single (with bath and breakfast) to $5 for a double.

Food: Dutch

The traveler who is intent on sampling the gastronomic specialties of

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the places he visits may run into some difficulty in Holland. The national dishes are for the most part on the simple and hearty side, and they are often not available at the establishments which cater to tourists.

I heard a great deal about Dutch pea soup, which is cooked with spicy sausages and pig's hocks and is supposed to be so thick that a spoon placed in the tureen will stand upright; whenever I asked for it, I was told that it was only featured on the bill of fare in winter. I did eventually succeed in getting *rolpens* — minced beef encased in tripe, pickled, and served with apple fritters — and it will never figure on my list of memorable dishes. Other national specialties are smoked eels; *kroepoek*, fritters of ground shrimp; *Leiden hutspot*, a hotchpotch of stewed beef and vegetables; and, during the month of April exclusively, plover's eggs, which are esteemed an extraordinary delicacy.

The standard tipple *du pays* is *jenever* or Dutch gin, which is drunk neat and has the faintly bitter flavor of juniper berries. The guidebooks assert that Dutch gin is a slowly acquired taste. All I can say is that I became an *aficionado* after sampling two glasses at a picnic on the New Jersey shore, circa 1940; in my book, a *borrel*, as the Dutch call a glass of their gin, is one of the world's finest *apéritifs* — the equal of the perfect dry martini. Another Dutch specialty in the drink department is *advocaat*, an eggnog which must contain a couple of thousand calories and which, in this reporter's opinion, is nauseating stuff.

Food: Indonesian

The most memorable food in Holland is served at the Indonesian restaurants. The two best are the Bali in Amsterdam and the Bali in Scheveningen, the seaside resort next to The Hague; and their prices are incredibly low.

The specialty at these places is *rijsttafel*, which comes in two sizes, large and small. Anyone with a normal appetite will find the "small" *rijsttafel* as much as he or she can cope with. Along with steamed and fried rice, it consists of some fifteen platters — the large serving runs to about thirty-five — containing such items as curry soup, shrimp, meat in fried coconut, spit-roasted pork in hot sauce, fried fish, fried eggs, liver in spicy sauce, and a galaxy of sauces

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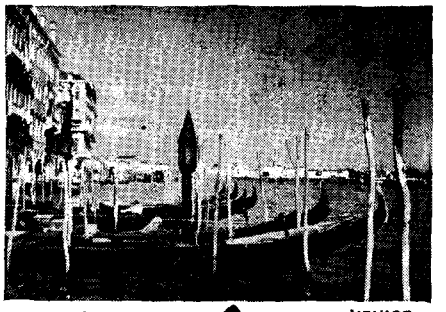

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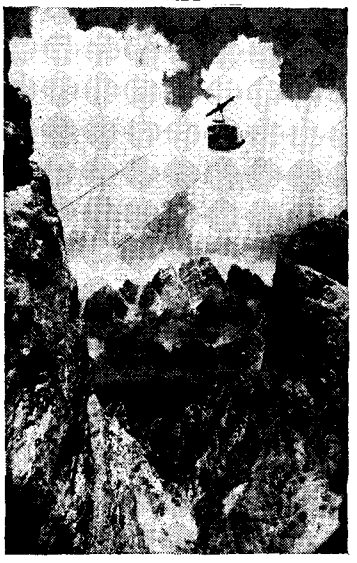
CORTINA D'AMPEZZO



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and condiments. This sumptuous meal, accompanied by a bottle of the admirable Heineken's beer, cost me $2 at the Bali in Amsterdam, tip included.

I suspect that every moderately solvent post-war traveler who has alighted in Amsterdam has paid a visit to The Five Flies, a restaurant housed in an early seventeenth century building and operated by one Nicolaas Kroese, a showman who specializes in dishing out Ye Olde Dutche atmosphere to tourists, preferably American. (The natives assured me that you will never see a Dutchman at The Five Flies, but this is no doubt a slight exaggeration.)

Personally I was not convulsed with delight by the spectacle of the all-tourist clientele oafishly reveling in the blatantly contrived quaintness; and the cuisine struck me as no more than moderately good for the price,

which is rather stiff for Holland. However, I know of several highly discriminating travelers who have found The Five Flies irresistible.

The best restaurant in Amsterdam for refined cuisine is Dikker en Thijs, an extremely staid and rather expensive place, whose décor and atmosphere might be described as international Edwardian. Of the authentic "character" places, I recommend Die Port van Cleve, a journalists' and businessmen's tavern, founded in 1870, which is notable for its fine *biefstuks* and its low prices. My favorite spots in The Hague are the Château Bleu, which is chic and expensive; and Sauer, where the sea food is superlatively good. In Rotterdam, the Erasmus is one of the very few first-class restaurants in Holland which specialize in making, to order, the classic Dutch dishes.

Touring by car

Sight-seeing in Holland presents few problems since the distances are

minute, tour services are legion, and buses and trains are comfortable and inexpensive. At the peak of the season, however, the bus tours are often booked to capacity, and anyone who can afford the moderate additional expense will reap handsome dividends from renting a car. A small English car or a Volkswagen, which are perfectly adequate for touring Holland, can be obtained for around $6 a day.

A 120-mile swing, beginning and ending in Amsterdam, covers most of the principal cities and a number of the country's scenic highlights. First comes Haarlem, the showcase for Frans Hals and the capital of the tulip trade; then the unforgettable patchwork of bulb fields and the beautiful Keukenhof estate at Lisse, in whose gigantic glass pavilion the finest varieties of bulbs are displayed from mid-April to mid-May; then Leiden, whose physical charm and historical association are complemented by one of the choicest eating places in Holland, the delightful Taveerne de Beukenhof in the near-by village of Oegstgeest.

From Leiden a short ride takes you to The Hague, where the beautiful Mauritshuis boasts a collection of the masterpieces of Dutch painting which is only surpassed by that of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. Less than fifteen minutes from The Hague there is Delft, tranquil and graceful, a veritable museum of Dutch architecture in every stage of its development.

Authentic hand-made Delft pottery is no longer obtainable except in the antique shops. Much of the factory-made "Delftware" sold in Holland is no longer produced in Delft, and much of it is junk. In the best pottery shops, however, it is possible to find contemporary Delft articles which, though not comparable to the old hand-painted pieces, are gracefully designed and delicately colored.

The itinerary suggested above leads on to Rotterdam, at whose center, barbarously devastated by the Nazis, an ultramodern city is emerging; to Gouda, where the Thursday cheese market is an intriguing spectacle; and to Utrecht, one of the oldest cities in Holland, which has a magnificent cathedral. On the way back to Amsterdam there are a couple of so-called "costume" villages which are not as disconcertingly commercialized as the more famous Marken and Volendam in the north; and slight detours will take you to several of the loveliest moated castles in Holland.

Some oddities

In traveling around and in reading about the Netherlands, I came across some oddities and some queer scraps of information which seem worth passing on to the prospective visitor:

Amsterdam is the capital of Holland but The Hague is the seat of government.

Holland is so flat that the nine hills of over 300 feet in the province of Gelderland are sometimes referred to as "the Dutch Alps."

In the village of Broek, which claims to be the cleanest in the world, the streets are scrubbed with soap.

Some 2800 varieties of tulips are grown in Holland. When a tulip mania swept Europe in the sixteen-thirties, one bulb was sold for $2000 plus a coach-and-four.

A popular restaurant in Amsterdam has found an ingenious way of satisfying Dutch thrift, the robust Dutch appetite, and the Dutch passion for diminutives. It features a 25-cent luncheon billed as "Big Little Twelve O'clocklet."

Fooi in Dutch means tip, and *menu*

is not the bill of fare but the fixed price or table-d'hôte meal.

Dutch authors, per capita, produce more books per year than the Americans, the British, or the French.

CHARLES J. ROLO

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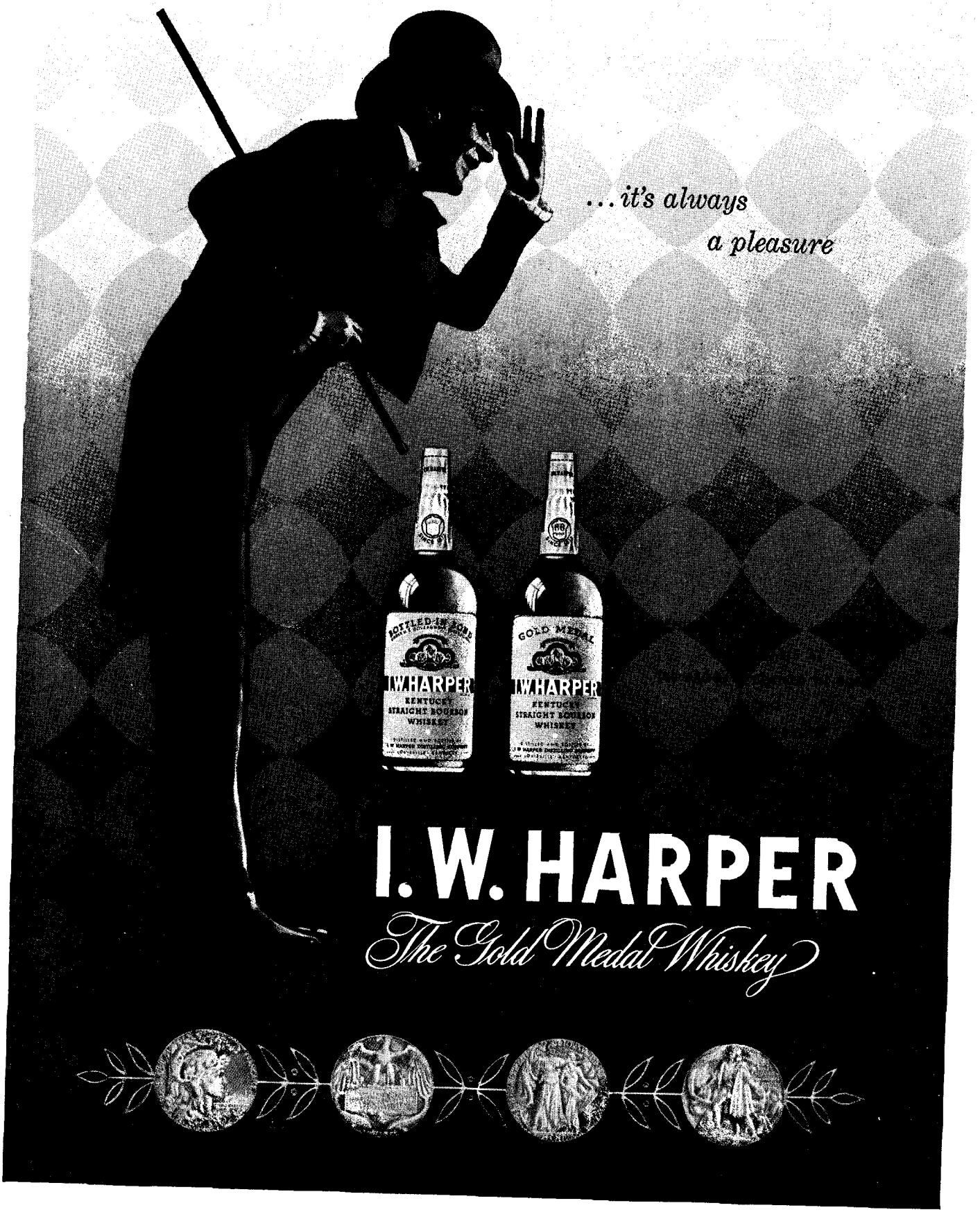

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